

 **HEROES OF KOKODA:** AUSTRALIA'S LAST DEFENCE

# HISTORY *of* WAR



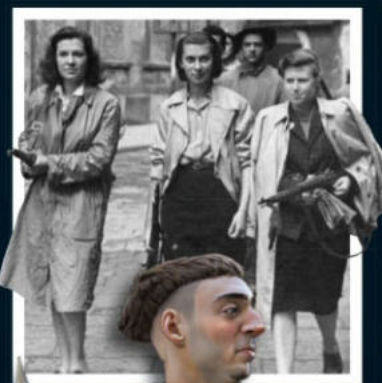
**BATTLE OF JUTLAND**

VICTORIA CROSS  
SACRIFICE AT SEA

## MUSSOLINI'S DOWNFALL

How guerrilla tactics and brutal partisan reprisals dealt Axis Italy the death blow

**UH-1  
HUEY**  
ON BOARD THE ICONIC  
VIETNAM WAR BIRD



**PLUS:**

- ★ Battle of Sedan
- ★ Conquest of Canaan
- ★ Sturmpanzer anatomy



**SECOND  
AGINCOURT**

THE MAN BEHIND ENGLAND'S  
FORGOTTEN VICTORY



**HELL  
SALVADOR**

WHY THIS NIGHTMARE NATION  
IS STILL AT WAR WITH ITSELF



**BRITAIN'S  
DESERT REBEL**

HOW LAWRENCE WROUGHT  
HAVOC IN THE ARAB REVOLT



**OPERATION  
BARBAROSSA**

INSIDE THE HORROR OF  
HITLER'S RUSSIAN INFERNO

Digital Edition  
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ISSUE 029





*Britain*

# The RAF Collection

Right  
**B25025** RAF Pilot and  
Girl Kissing Goodbye  
2 Piece Set

Above  
**B25021** RAF Military  
Policeman  
1 Piece Set in Window Box

Left  
**B25024** RAF Ground  
Aircraftman on Bicycle  
2 Piece Set

Our RAF collection of 1:30 scale figures pays tribute to the heroes of the Royal Air Force for their hard work and sacrifice during WW2. Handcrafted in our matte finish style, incorporating highly detailed sculpting plus shading and highlighting in the painting, these figures are truly extraordinary.



2 Piece Set in Window Box

**B25019** RAF Pilot 1943 with  
Faithful Companion



1 Piece Set in Window Box

**B25023** Prime Minister Winston  
Churchill No.1



2 Piece Set in Window Box

**B25018** RAF Commemorative  
Set WAAF with Bicycle, 1943



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# Welcome

**“Rebellion must have an unassailable base,  
something guarded not merely from attack,  
but from the fear of it”**

– TE Lawrence, *The Evolution of a Revolt* (1920)

**W**hile the Western Front was mired in static trench attrition, a highly mobile guerilla rebellion was raging in the harsh deserts of the Middle East. Though it may have been just a ‘sideshow of a sideshow’, the Arab Revolt of 1916-18 shook up the balance of power in the region, and produced one of the most iconic figures of the war.

In this issue we also tackle another sideshow that played out in Northern Italy, as Mussolini’s Social Republic crumbled around him at the hands of a bitter civil war. In April 1945 partisan fighters

caught up with Il Duce, who was promptly and unceremoniously shot – Axis Italy’s figurehead had finally been toppled.



*Tim*  
**Tim Williamson**  
Editor



**EMAIL**

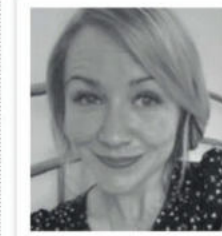
frontline@imagine-publishing.co.uk

## CONTRIBUTORS



### TOM GARNER

For years Tom has been championing the great (but forgotten) exploits of John, Duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V. This issue he sets the record straight, exploring Bedford’s victory at Verneuil, and his campaign against Joan of Arc (page 52).



### ALICE ROBERTS-PRAIT

As Heritage Project Officer, Alice has been preparing for the National Museum of the Royal Navy’s Battle of Jutland centenary exhibition: ‘36 Hours’. On page 28, she recounts how HMS Lion survived the battle, thanks to one man’s sacrifice.



### DAVID SMITH

After the invasion of Sicily in 1943, the fate of Axis Italy and its dictator was all but sealed. However, as David explores, Il Duce’s final fall would only come after a long and brutal struggle between remaining Axis forces and partisan guerillas (page 34).

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TE Lawrence pictured at Amman Aerodrome in 1921



# MUSSOLINI'S DOWNFALL



**34** Uncover the horrors of Italy's civil war and the bloody path to Il Duce's demise



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The bloodiest theatre of the war saw many gifted leaders come to the fore for their countries

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This aging self-propelled gun had its last outing in Operation Barbarossa

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Historian and author Roger Moorhouse discusses what went wrong with the German plan

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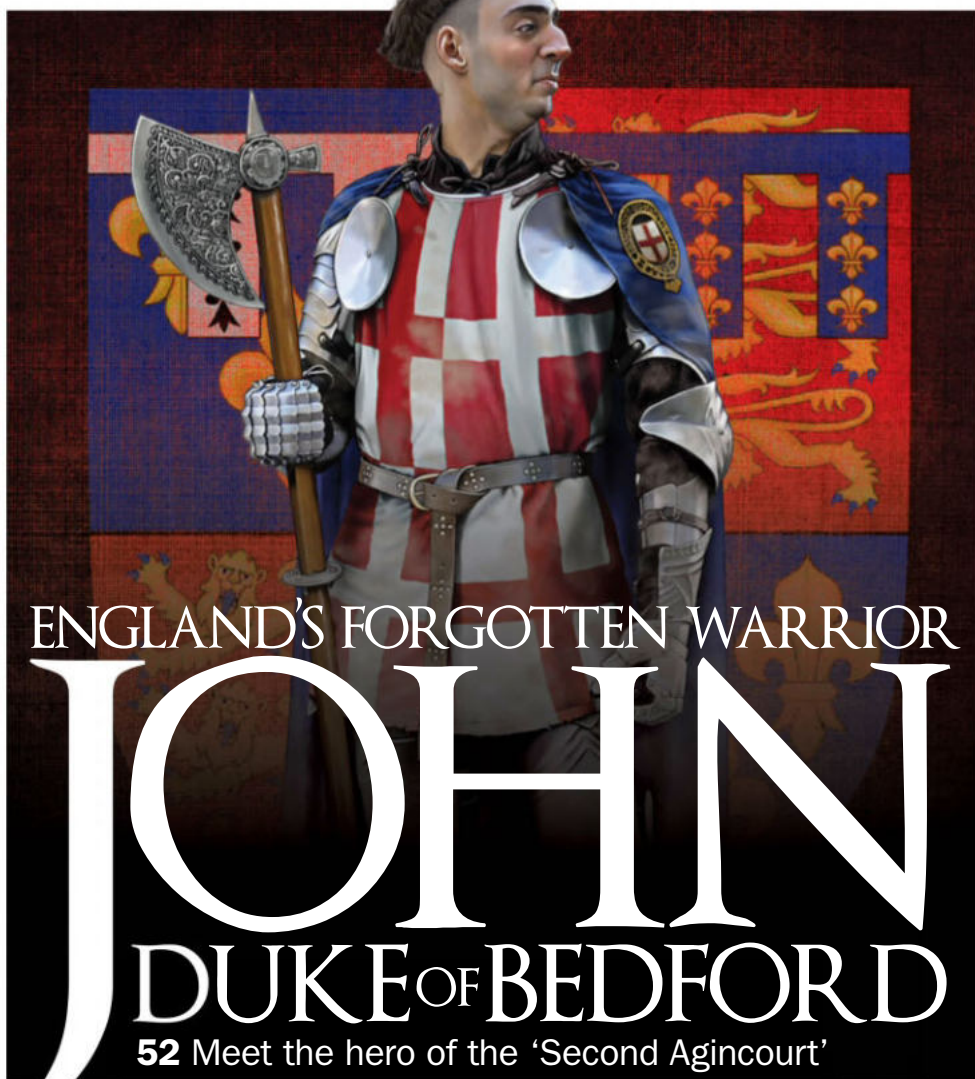
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This astounding find belonged to one of Richard III's ill-fated followers

## HELL SALVADOR

74 Inside the roots of the nation at war with itself





# WAR<sup>in</sup> FOCUS

## REMEMBERING THE ANZACS

*Taken: 25 April, 2016*

Members of the Albert Battery shoot a volley of fire during the Currumbin Returned and Services League (RSL) dawn service in Gold Coast, Australia. Commemorated annually, Anzac Day marks the landing of Australian and New Zealander troops on the shores of Gallipoli, at the start of the infamous campaign.











## **WAR**<sub>in</sub> **FOCUS**

### **“SEE YOU AT THE LODGE!”**

*Taken: c. 1941*

German Gebirgsjäger, or mountain troops, pictured on patrol with during the Norwegian winter. These specialist units were trained to fight and survive not only in harsh weather conditions, but also in unforgiving terrain.

As well as Norway, Gebirgsjäger units operated in Austria, the Balkans and Italy.





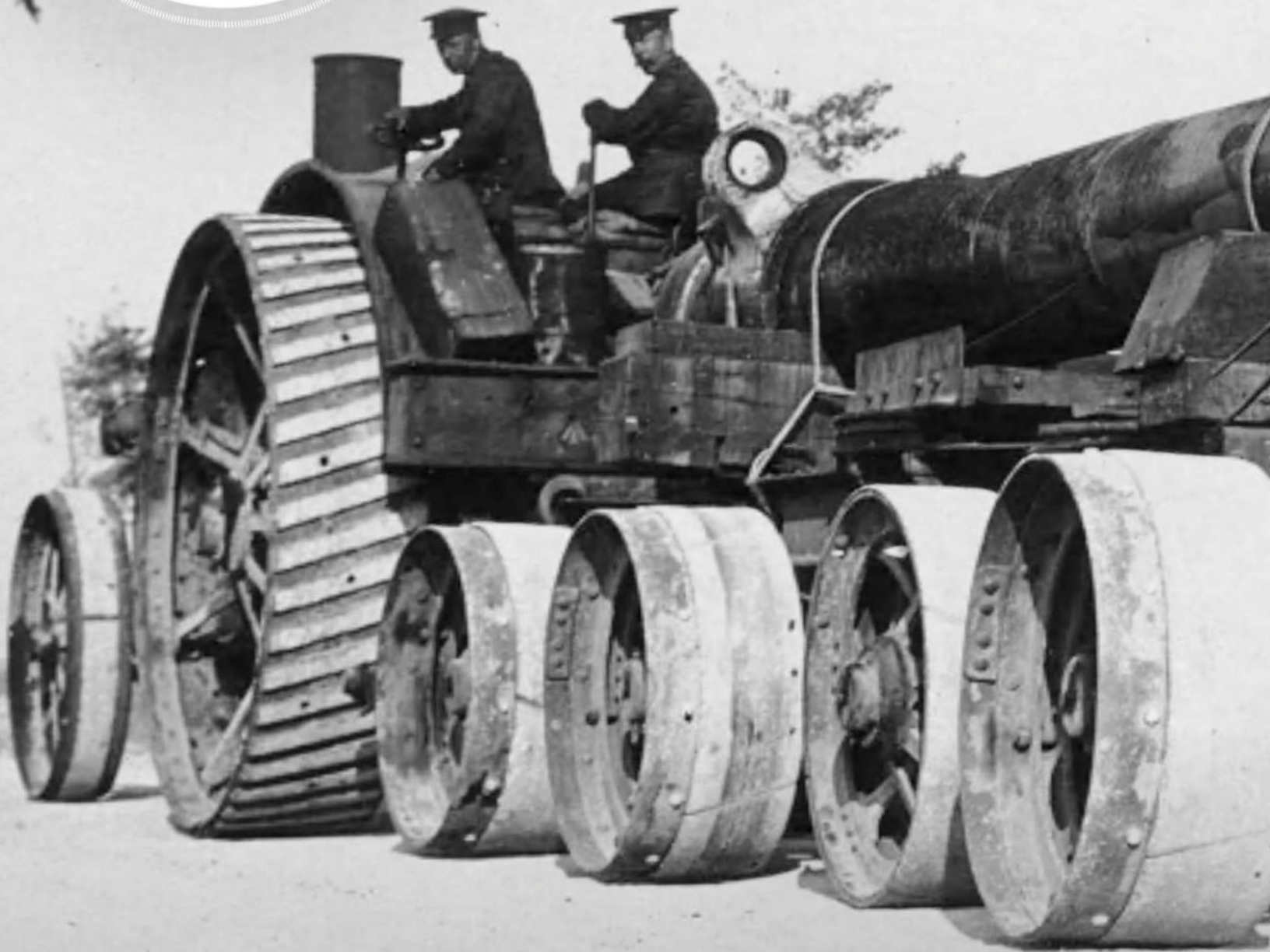


## **WAR**<sub>in</sub> **FOCUS**

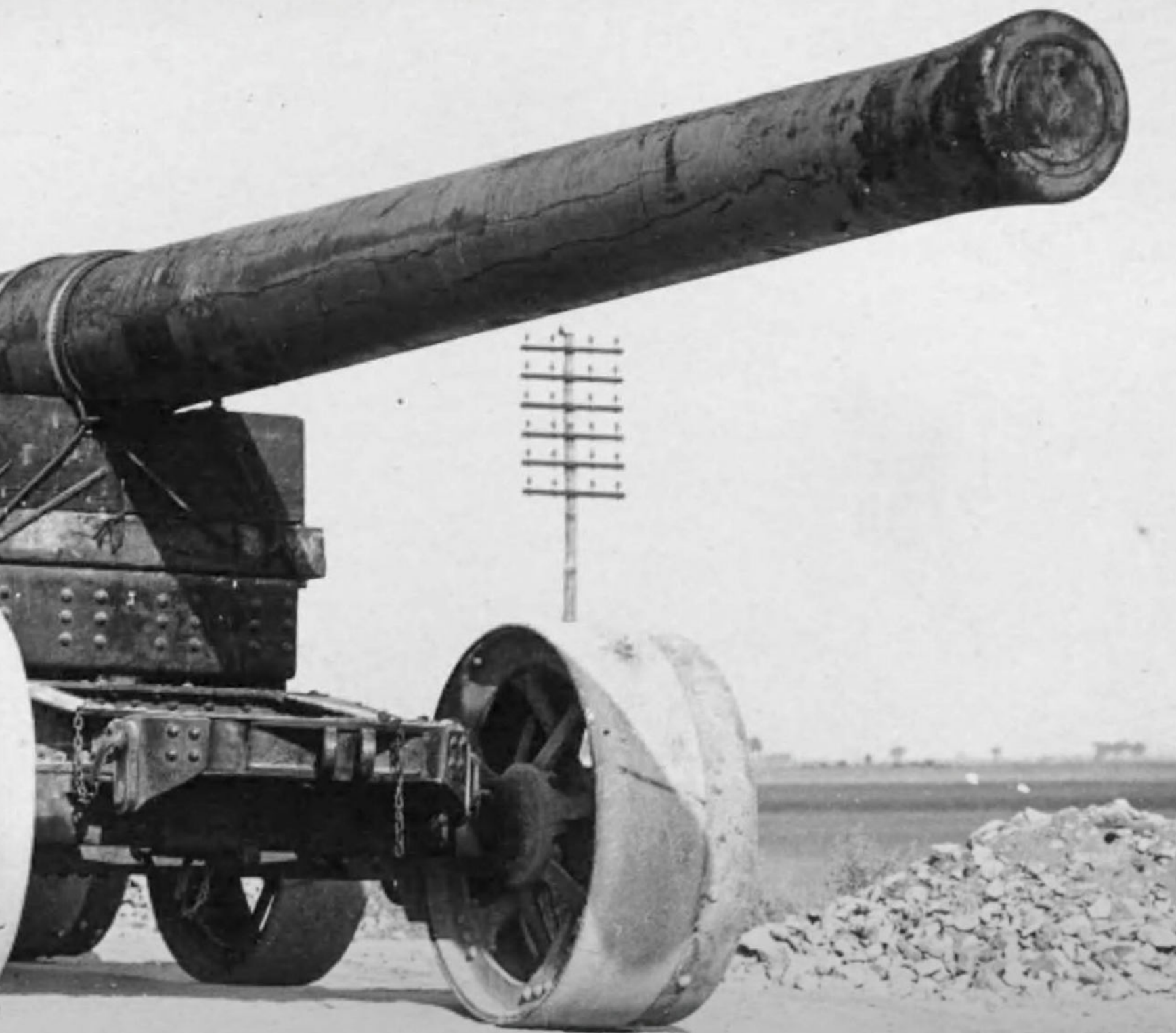
### **DID SOMEONE ORDER A MASSIVE GUN?**

*Taken: c. 1917*

A heavy artillery piece is painstakingly hauled along the coast at Flanders by a tractor. Because of the sheer size and weight of these former naval guns, the slow repositioning would begin well in advance of major offensives.







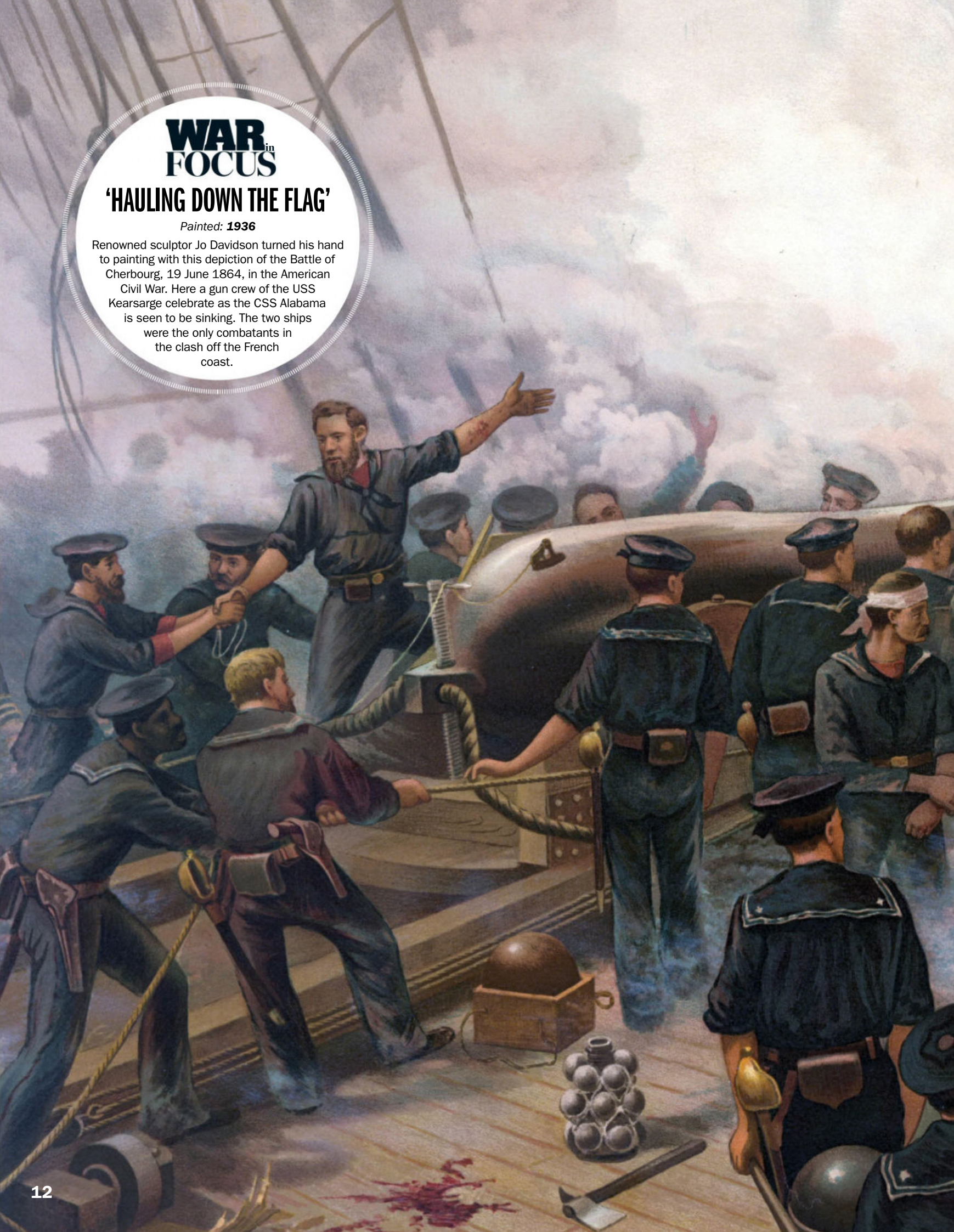


# WAR<sup>in</sup> FOCUS

## 'HAULING DOWN THE FLAG'

Painted: 1936

Renowned sculptor Jo Davidson turned his hand to painting with this depiction of the Battle of Cherbourg, 19 June 1864, in the American Civil War. Here a gun crew of the USS Kearsarge celebrate as the CSS Alabama is seen to be sinking. The two ships were the only combatants in the clash off the French coast.









# OPERATION BARBAROSSA

Axis forces wage their first invasion of Russia, creating a new front and the bloodiest theatre of the entire war

Wehrmacht troops advance into Russia in 1941, with a Swastika identifying them to friendly aircraft

## THE INVASION OF THE SOVIET UNION BEGINS

Despite establishing trade agreements two years previous, Hitler pushes ahead with the plan to invade the Soviet Union, purge its population and repopulate with Aryan blood. In the early hours of, bombing raids begin in Poland and the Crimea.

22 June 1941

3 July 1941

6 July – 5 August 1941

23 August – 26 September 1941

## STALIN ENACTS THE SCORCHED EARTH POLICY

With a new Eastern Front carved out in the space of a single morning, and Germany crushing the Red Army at every encounter, Stalin orders Soviet troops to destroy bridges, sabotage railway lines, take down telegraph lines and demolish roads to hamper the Axis advance.

## THE BATTLE OF SMOLENSK

Over the course of a single month, the Axis commits over 400,000 infantry and 1,000 tanks encircle and pummel the city of Smolensk. The Germans suffer considerable losses, but eventually take the key strategic point on the road to Moscow.



## KIEV FALLS TO THE GERMANS

As the German advance continues at an astonishing pace from multiple angles, the Ukrainian city of Kiev is one of the next big targets on the Axis radar. The city is encircled by 500,000 troops and Panzer tanks, while the Red Army, with between 650,000-800,000 troops, is completely routed.

A German artillery piece surveys the Dnieper River after the capture of Kiev



Left: German infantrymen during fighting near Smolensk, 1 September 1941



**“HITLER PUSHES AHEAD WITH THE PLAN TO INVADE RUSSIA, PURGE ITS POPULATION AND REPOPULATE WITH ARYAN BLOOD”**



*Above: Military exercises are carried out in Moscow in preparation for the massive Soviet counterattack*

## THE SOVIET COUNTEROFFENSIVE

With the Germans running low on oil and supplies and their numbers dwindling in the war of attrition for Moscow, the Red Army begins a bloody counteroffensive that forces the Axis to retreat outside of the city.



*On 7 November, Red Army soldiers took part in the annual October Revolution parade, and continued their march to the frontline to defend Moscow*

## OPERATION TYPHOON COMMENCES

Despite delays from Axis Command, the tactical operation to take Moscow swiftly, and cut the heart out of the Soviet Union, begins. The original plan to take the capital in four months proves too ambitious, so Hitler decides to attack from both the north and the south.

8 September 1941    2 October 1941    5 December 1941    6 December 1941

*Left: Soviet ski troops advance to the frontline in Leningrad, 1943*

## LENINGRAD IS BLOCKADED

German Army Group North encircles Leningrad and begins its two-and-a-half-year siege. Trapped inside, millions of the city's inhabitants suffered from starvation with reports of cannibalism becoming rife. The siege was lifted in 1944 and remains one of the longest, and most costly, sieges in history.



## THE ATTACK FALTERS

After two long months of fighting, and the German war machine faltering due to a lack of oil for the tanks and supplies for the troops, Hitler orders the Germans to stop trying to progress and hunker down. The Red Army has now swelled and soon outnumbers the Axis.

*Below: Heavily outnumbered, and lacking crucial supplies, German forces fell short of capturing Moscow*



*Images: Alamy, Getty*



# MARCH TO MOSCOW

Hitler's plan to conquer and eventually repopulate the Soviet Union led to the creation of the bloody Eastern Front

## 1 BATTLE OF RASEINIAI

**RASEINIAI, LITHUANIA: 23-27 JUNE 1941**

Alongside extensive air operations across the region, Axis forces began Operation Barbarossa with the Battle of Raseiniai, which saw the 4th Panzer Group and the 3rd Mechanised Corps utterly eviscerate Soviet armour in southern Lithuania.

## 2 BATTLE OF BRODY

**BRODY, WESTERN UKRAINE: 23-30 JUNE 1941**

Another tank-based battle, and another decisive victory for the Axis saw the Nazis rout a force of 3,500 Soviet armoured vehicles with a force of only 750. It was another testament to German tactics and another obliterated obstacle on the road to Moscow.

**LUFTWAFFE BOMBS KRONSTADT**  
22 JUNE 1941 KRONSTADT, NEAR LENINGRAD

**THE STALIN LINE IS DEVASTATED**  
8 JULY 1941 PSKOV OBLAST, RUSSIA

**GERMANS CAPTURE SHLISSELBURG**  
7 SEPTEMBER 1941, LENINGRAD OBLAST, RUSSIA

**200,000 SOVIETS STAND BETWEEN THE AXIS AND MOSCOW**  
26 JULY 1941, SMOLENSK

**GOEBBELS ANNOUNCES THE INVASION**  
22 JUNE 1941 BERLIN, GERMANY

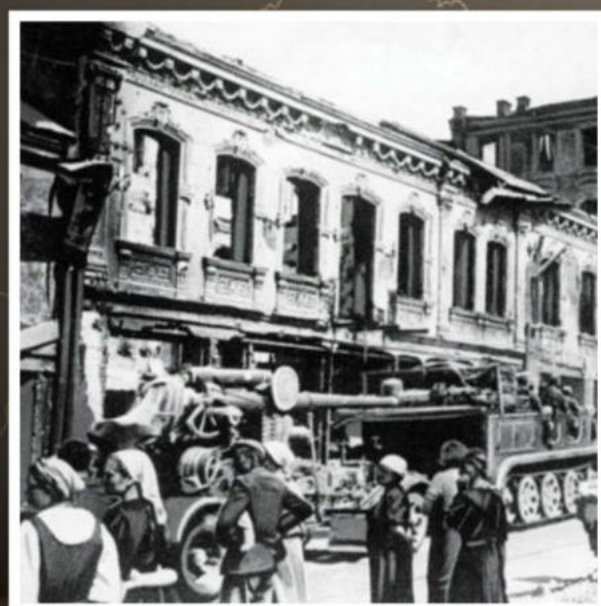
**ATTACK ON SOVIET-CONTROLLED POLAND**  
22 JUNE 1941, POLAND

**2ND AND 3RD PANZER GROUPS UNITE**  
27 JUNE 1941 MINSK, BELARUS

**MASS REVOLT AT SOBIBÓR EXTERMINATION CAMP**  
14 OCTOBER 1943, EASTERN POLAND

**SOVIET MOLDOVA INVADED**  
2 JULY 1941, MOLDOVA

**SEVASTOPOL PORT ATTACKED**  
30 OCTOBER 1941, CRIMEA



Left: German artillery moves through the ruins of Minsk after its capture

## 3 BATTLE OF BIALYSTOK-MINSK

**MINSK, BELARUS: 22 JUNE - 3 JULY 1941**

Easily one of the most devastating battles of the operation, a force of 750,000 German troops surrounds the key Soviet installation in the Belarusian city of Minsk. The German losses are high, but Minsk eventually falls.

## 4 BATTLE OF SMOLENSK

**SMOLENSK, RUSSIA: 6 JULY - 5 AUGUST 1941**

430,000 German infantry and 1,000 tanks assault the Smolensk region of the Soviet Union, crushing Soviet forces in opposition (around 300,000 of the 580,000 present were killed or captured) and taking the region.



## 5 BATTLE OF UMAN

**UMAN, WESTERN UKRAINE: 15 JULY – 8 AUGUST 1941**

Another large encirclement offensive sees Axis forces victorious (including troops from Germany, Slovakia and Romania). The Soviets are routed with 200,000 of its 300,000 troops captured or killed. After crushing the Soviets, Axis troops move towards Kiev.

## 6 BATTLE OF KIEV

**KIEV, UKRAINE: 23 AUGUST – 26 SEPTEMBER 1941**

Following on from the Battle of Uman, a huge mass of Axis forces surrounds the city of Kiev (the largest encirclement in history). Poor tactical decisions lead to an unprecedented loss of life for the Soviets (over 700,000 were killed or captured).

## THE ASSAULT ON MOSCOW BEGINS

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 1941, MOSCOW

**GERMAN OIL RESERVES RUN LOW**

JULY 1942, MOSCOW

**8 MOSCOW**

**RUSSIAN COUNTERATTACK BEGINS**

6 DECEMBER 1941, MOSCOW

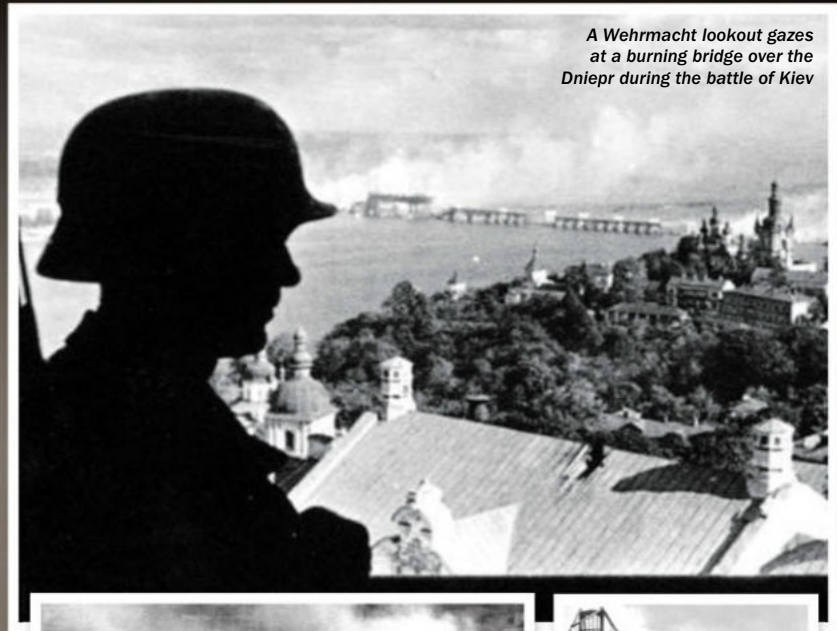
**MOSCOW-VOLGA CANAL CAPTURED**

DECEMBER 1941, JUST OUTSIDE MOSCOW

**FIRST LINE OF MOSCOW DEFENCES DESTROYED**

2 OCTOBER 1941 VYAZMA, SMOLENSK OBLAST, WEST OF MOSCOW

**RUSSIA**



A Wehrmacht lookout gazes at a burning bridge over the Dniepr during the battle of Kiev



Above: Kiev lies in ruins after prolonged bombing from both German and Soviet aircraft



Above: German engineers build a pontoon bridge the Dniepr River at Kiev in less than a day

The citizens of Moscow were organised into work teams and set about constructing miles of anti-tank defences around the city



Anti-aircraft guns guard the skies of Leningrad from enemy from airborne threats

## 7 SIEGE OF LENINGRAD

**ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA: 8 SEPTEMBER 1941 – 27 JANUARY 1944**

In one of the largest, longest and bloodiest sieges in the history of modern warfare, Axis forces bludgeon their way to the Soviet city of Leningrad/Stalingrad and begin a long war of attrition that eventually sees the siege lifted by the Soviets

## 8 BATTLE OF MOSCOW

**MOSCOW, RUSSIA: 2 OCTOBER 1941 – 7 JANUARY 1942**

One of the key turning points in the Red Army fight against the faltering Axis war machine, the Soviets fight a bloody battle to prevent the capital from falling and eventually drive the Germans out.



# HEAD TO HEAD

In 1941 the German and Soviet armies were the largest in Europe, but neither was adequately prepared for the apocalypse of Operation Barbarossa. Victory would come down to survival...

## WEHRMACHT

TIME PERIOD: JUNE-DECEMBER 1941 LOYALTY: THIRD REICH

### NUMBERS

The Axis invasion force consisted of 3.8 million men in four armies along an 820-mile front, from Finland to Romania. 3.2 million of the troops were German but there were also 300,000 Finns, 250,000 Romanians and 50,000 Slovakian soldiers.

### EQUIPMENT

Arguably the best machine gun in its class, the MG 34 was specifically designed for fluid infantry tactics with a lighter belt feed and a tripod. The Walter P 38 was a simple yet robust sidearm as was the Wehrmacht's standard rifle, the bolt-action Karabiner 98k.

### SURVIVABILITY

The Germans expected a short campaign and mostly fought in summer uniforms, so they lacked proper clothing during the winter when the temperature plunged to a record -41 degrees Celsius. Consequently, by 1942, 113,000 German had been killed or incapacitated by frostbite.

### LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

The infantry were severely hampered by the Russian winter and short-sighted planning. Guns and the lubricant in engines froze, while basic supplies became severely stretched. Inability to replace damaged vehicles saw over 625,000 horses put into the field.

TOTAL ★★★★★

### FATAL COMPLACENCY

Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union was marred by complacency throughout the operation. Adolf Hitler proclaimed: "We only have to kick in the front door and the whole rotten Russian edifice will come tumbling down." The Germans held on to this view even in the face of the infamously harsh winter. When supply lines became overstretched, the priority was given to arms and ammunition. Winter uniforms remained in warehouses in Germany and even the horses that the Wehrmacht used as draught animals proved unable to cope with the cold. Eventually nearly one million soldiers were killed, wounded or missing by early 1942.

German battlefield prowess was no match for Mother Nature in Mother Russia







Above: During Germans assault on Russia over 3 million Soviet POWs lost their lives

## A TERRIBLE COST

The Red Army may have been prepared for winter, but its losses were catastrophic. The numbers are heavily disputed but during June-December 1941 up to 1 million soldiers were killed in action with an unknown number of wounded. Additionally over 3 million troops were captured and of those taken prisoner 2

million would already be dead by February 1942 due to wilful neglect on the part of the Germans. Approximately 3-4 million Soviet troops died as a result of the German invasion. Barbarossa set the tone for future casualties and by 1945 an average of 25 million Soviets had died. One figure states that over 60 per cent of Soviet males born in 1923 did not survive the war.

## RED ARMY

**TIME PERIOD:** JUNE-DECEMBER 1941 **LOYALTY:** SOVIET UNION

### NUMBERS

In June 1941, the Red Army could muster 5 million men in 303 divisions, but between June and December of the same year it was also able to field an extra 290 divisions from scratch and collected 1.25 million men to defend Moscow.

### EQUIPMENT

Many Soviet weapons were antiquated, including the standard-issue Mosin-Nagant Model rifle, which while reliable was first designed in the 19th century. The DP-28 light machine gun took a long time to change magazines and even old-fashioned Maxim machine guns were still in use.

### SURVIVABILITY

The Russians were better prepared for winter warfare than the Germans, with their uniforms consisting of fur clothes of coats and hats along with traditional thick woollen footwear called 'valenki'. They also had skis for travelling over ice.

### LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Initially, many Russian units were based in former Polish territories that were quickly overrun. They also lacked sufficient tanks and trucks with spare parts, which resulted in a logistical breakdown. However, an organised retreat and regrouping on home turf reasserted the Soviet war machine.

**TOTAL** 





# COMMANDERS OF BARBAROSSA

After invasion began, military leaders on both sides rose to prominence and also fell from grace

## GEORGY ZHUKOV

YEARS ACTIVE: 1915-1957

ALLEGIANCE: SOVIET UNION

When Hitler greenlit the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Zhukov was one of the high-ranking Russian commanders that signed the official military countermeasures to drive out the invaders and restore order to the fringes of the nation. The plan was to take a large force of Russian armour and infantry and encircle the German force, but despite superior numbers the Soviets were routed by Axis forces.

In August 1941, when the Axis surrounded Kiev and besieged the city, Zhukov had advised Stalin to evacuate the city rather than risk the lives of its inhabitants. Stalin refused and when the city fell 600,000 men were taken into captivity.

The advice to withdraw from Kiev saw Stalin withdraw Zhukov from the opening months of

the conflict, and was forced to sit back and watch his nation slowly brought to its knees by a German hammer that crushed Russian resistance at every encounter. By September, Hitler was directing most of his forces in Russia towards Moscow, and Zhukov was soon sent back in the field to safeguard the city.

Zhukov's impact on the defences of the city was immediate. His decision to recall Soviet forces stationed in the Far East bolstered the resistance effort, with many hailing his tactical direction to get them to the city in record time as a key influence on the siege's eventual outcome. The German attempt to overrun the city was hampered reinforcements pouring in and the end of the year, Zhukov organised a counterattack on 6 December that drove the Axis out of the city.

*Right: Zhukov would continue to play a pivotal role in the Allied war effort and would become one of the Soviet Union's most decorated commanders*



*Above: Vasilevsky would remain an important figure in the Red Army's fight against the Axis, and was present during the Japanese surrender in 1945*

## WALTHER VON BRAUCHITSCH

YEARS ACTIVE: 1900-1941

ALLEGIANCE: THIRD REICH

Following his pivotal status during the Battle of France and the successful invasions of Greece and Yugoslavia, Hitler was quick to promote von Brauchitsch in July 1940. As the director of the Axis ground forces, he was central to Germany's early success prior to Moscow.

In June 1941, when Hitler ordered the systematic invasion of the Soviet Union, von Brauchitsch was one of a handful of high-ranking officials who assisted in refining the original plan and tactics.

His direction of the Axis ground forces helped Germany crush Soviet forces across Russia, however, Hitler's decision to push all Panzer battalions towards Moscow proved a grave error and von Brauchitsch was soon blamed for the fiasco and pulled from his position of power.



*Brauchitsch spent the rest of the war in enforced retirement before being arrested for war crimes. He died of a heart attack in 1948*

## ALEKSANDR VASILEVSKY

YEARS ACTIVE: 1915-1918; 1919-1959 ALLEGIANCE: SOVIET UNION

An experienced soldier in World War I and in the Civil War, Aleksandr Mikhaylovich Vasilevsky famously worked alongside Georgy Zhukov in the Allied fight against the Axis in the latter years of the war, but he would still play a significant part in the 1941 invasion.

In August 1941, Vasilevsky was appointed Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff and Deputy Chief of the General Staff, positioning him as one of the most

powerful military leads in the Red Army. Two months later, he was transferred to Moscow to help coordinate the defence of the city. He helped organise the three fronts of the city, a job that often kept him working until 4am each day.

A bomb injured Vasilevsky in late October, but he continued to assist overseeing Moscow's defences up until the counter-offensive that drove the Germans out of the city on 6 December.



## WILHELM RITTER VON LEEB

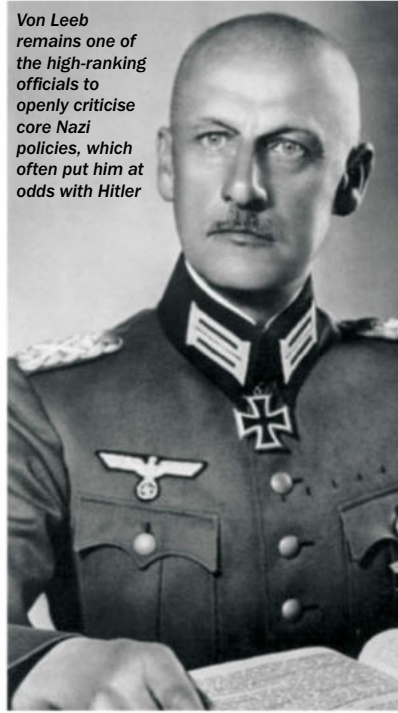
**YEARS ACTIVE:** 1895-1938; 1939-1942  
**ALLEGIANCE:** THIRD REICH

In World War I, Wilhelm Josef Franz Ritter von Leeb had carved a respectable career in the German Army, receiving the Knight's Cross of the Military Order of Max Joseph in 1916 in honour of his bravery. Von Leeb was famously involved in the dismantling of the Nazi Beer Hall Putsch in 1923 that saw the rise of Hitler begin to find traction.

As a result, von Leeb remained one of Hitler's least favoured commanders when the Nazi Party assumed control of the country – something perpetuated even further by his criticisms of the party's more extreme policies. As such, he was pensioned off in 1938 but was soon recalled in 1939 when the Wehrmacht was in need of experienced officers.

As the commander of Army Group North, von Leeb regained Hitler's confidence with the swift manner in which his forces crushed the Soviets in the opening months of the invasion, eventually surrounding Leningrad entirely. Despite then directly ordering the advance to halt, Hitler soon began criticising von Leeb for a lack of decisiveness. Now utterly exasperated with his leader's interference, von Leeb requested he be relieved of command and Hitler soon complied.

*Von Leeb remains one of the high-ranking officials to openly criticise core Nazi policies, which often put him at odds with Hitler*



## SEMYON BUDYONNY

**YEARS ACTIVE:** 1903-1954  
**ALLEGIANCE:** SOVIET UNION



*Budyonny retired as a Hero of the Soviet Union and died in 1973 from a brain haemorrhage*

A red cossack, a cavalryman and close ally of Stalin, Semyon Mikhailovich Budyonny had already carved himself an illustrious career in the Red Army by the time Hitler ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union. As a passionate soldier, Budyonny had an infamous distaste for the tank and other symbols of modern military hardware but he was well respected and was promoted to Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Direction in 1941.

However, the German advance was relentless in the opening months of the invasion and its tactic of total encirclement (surrounding a city from all sides and bombarding it into submission) led to the bloody battles of Uman and Kiev where the region eventually fell 650,000 to 850,000 Soviet soldiers into German hands.

It was an unmitigated disaster for the Soviets and Stalin was quick to blame Budyonny, but ultimately he would avoid any real punishment, remaining one of the Union's most revered political figures.



## FEDOR VON BOCK

**YEARS ACTIVE:** 1898-1945  
**ALLEGIANCE:** THIRD REICH

Moritz Albrecht Franz Friedrich Fedor von Bock was a fiery commander who had earned the nickname 'Der Sterber' due to his total devotion to the German Army. He believed that dying on the battlefield for the Fatherland was the highest honour a soldier could achieve.

Von Bock entered the German invasion of the Soviet Union as one of Hitler's most favoured generals. He had a string of successful campaigns and battles under his belt and held enough influence to alter Hitler's invasion plans, opting for a more direct approach to take Moscow swiftly. In the first few months, however, Hitler and von Bock clashed when the Führer ignored the commander's request to ignore pockets of resistance and point the Axis forces at Moscow.

Von Bock was eventually given command of Operation Typhoon, the new plan to take Moscow and his orders and tactics brought the Germans incredibly close to taking the city. However, a mixture of terrible winter conditions and increasing Soviet resistance led to a retreat from Moscow in December 1941.

*Left: Following Operation Typhoon, von Bock's military career continued to falter in the years that followed*

## "WHEN GERMANY BEGAN ITS GRAND INVASION IN 1941, HE WAS GIVEN COMMAND OF THE NORTHWESTERN DIRECTION"

## KLIMENT VOROSHILOV

**YEARS ACTIVE:** 1917-1941  
**ALLEGIANCE:** SOVIET UNION

Another figure with a tumultuous relationship with Stalin, Voroshilov's prominent place among the Soviet Union's highest ranking officials had been in doubt in the run up to the 1941 invasion. A member of the State Defence Committee, he had overseen Soviet participation in the Winter War, but a string of humiliating defeats had seen his seat of power brought into question.

When Germany began its grand invasion in 1941, he was given command of the Northwestern Direction, commanding several different fronts against the advancing Nazis. By September 1941, he was one of the main commanders in control of the Leningrad defences and was commended on his personal bravery, leading a counterattack against the Germans with nothing more than a pistol to defend himself. However, his tactics were seen as archaic and ineffective against the onslaught of the Axis and he was soon replaced with Georgy Zhukov.



*While Voroshilov's military career ended in 1941, it segued into a successful political career alongside Stalin*

Images: Alamy



# DEFENCE OF PAVLOV'S HOUSE

An under-strength platoon of Soviet soldiers defends Stalingrad's house of horrors against overwhelming Wehrmacht numbers

The Battle of Stalingrad is one of the most brutal battles in history and, for most historians, it is the crucial turning point of World War II. The Nazi attempt to take the strategic city of Stalingrad on the Volga River turned into an apocalyptic bloodbath. It resulted in huge casualties and led to the eventual retreat and defeat of the Axis armies in Russia. There were countless acts of heroism in the battle but one of the most famous is the dogged, two-month-long Russian resistance at a place called, 'Pavlov's House', a fortified apartment block in the centre of the city.

**"THE NAZI ATTEMPT TO TAKE THE STRATEGIC CITY OF STALINGRAD ON THE VOLGA RIVER TURNED INTO AN APOCALYPTIC BLOODBATH"**

## 1. THE GERMANS ATTACK AN APARTMENT BUILDING

On 23 September 1942, German soldiers attack a four-storey apartment block in the centre of Stalingrad. The building is parallel to the west bank of the Volga River and overlooks '9th January Square', a large public square that is named after the Bloody Sunday Massacre of 1905.

## 2. SERGEANT PAVLOV SEIZES THE BUILDING

When the apartment block is attacked, a platoon of Soviet soldiers from the 13th Guards Rifle Division is ordered to take and defend it. They are led by Sergeant Yakov Pavlov, a low-ranking NCO who is serving as the acting platoon commander as the unit's lieutenant and senior sergeants have all been killed and wounded. The assault on the building is successful, although, only four men out of a 30-man platoon survive the assault.

## 3. PAVLOV STRIKES STRATEGIC GOLD

Pavlov surveys the situation and finds the house is strategically well placed for a defence. It is positioned on a cross street and gives the defenders a clear line of sight for one kilometre to the north, south and west of the city. After two days he is reinforced and resupplied, bringing his unit up to under-strength number of 25 men.

## 4. DIGGING IN

Joseph Stalin issues Order Number 227 to the troops in Stalingrad, "Not one step back." Pavlov takes this to heart and orders the building to be surrounded with four layers of barbed wire and minefields. He also sets up machine gun posts in every available window facing the square as well as anti-tank rifles and mortars.

## 5. TANK DESTRUCTION FROM THE ROOF

Pavlov discovers that a PTRS-41 anti-tank rifle is very effective against German tanks when it is mounted on the roof. When tanks approach within 25 metres of the building, their thin turret armour becomes exposed to anti-tank fire from above but they are unable to elevate their weapons high enough to retaliate. Pavlov reportedly destroys almost a dozen tanks using this tactic.

## 6. INTERNAL LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT

In order to communicate properly, Pavlov's men breach the walls in the basement and upper floors of the building and also dig a communications trench to Soviet positions outside. Supplies are brought in via then trench or by boats crossing the Volga, despite German air raids and shelling.

## 7. A HARSH EXISTENCE

Despite the creation of the communications trench, the soldiers (and civilians who live in the basement) constantly suffer from a shortage of food and especially water. There are no beds and the soldiers try to sleep on insulation wool torn off pipes.

## 8. A RELENTLESS BOMBARDMENT

The Germans continually shoot at the building day and night but each time soldiers or tanks cross the square to close in Pavlov's men inflict a hail of machine gun and anti-tank fire from the basement, windows and roof top, inflicting large casualties and forcing the Germans to retreat.

## 9. A GRIM TACTIC?

By mid-November Pavlov's men reputedly use the lulls in fighting to run out and kick over-heaped piles of German corpses so that they are not used as cover for the next round of attackers. Whatever the truth, the defenders hold out until they are relieved by Soviet counterattacks on 25 November 1942.

## THE CASUALTIES OF STALINGRAD

**THE SOVIET VICTORY IN THE CAUCASUS TURNED THE TIDE OF WWII BUT AT A HORRENDOUS PRICE FOR BOTH SIDES**

The Battle of Stalingrad ended at the end of January and early February 1943, almost exactly ten years to the day that Adolf Hitler had come to power in Germany in 1933. He had envisaged a Third Reich that would last for a thousand years but after Stalingrad that dream sharply evaporated. The reason for this was the massive casualties incurred by the Germans during the battle. The Wehrmacht's Sixth Army had originally been comprised of 285,000 soldiers. Of these men 165,000 had been killed and 29,000 had been wounded and evacuated. That left 91,000 men who were taken prisoner by the Russians despite Hitler's refusal to allow the men to surrender. Most of these prisoners would not survive Soviet captivity. It is estimated that only 5,000 German troops escaped the carnage.

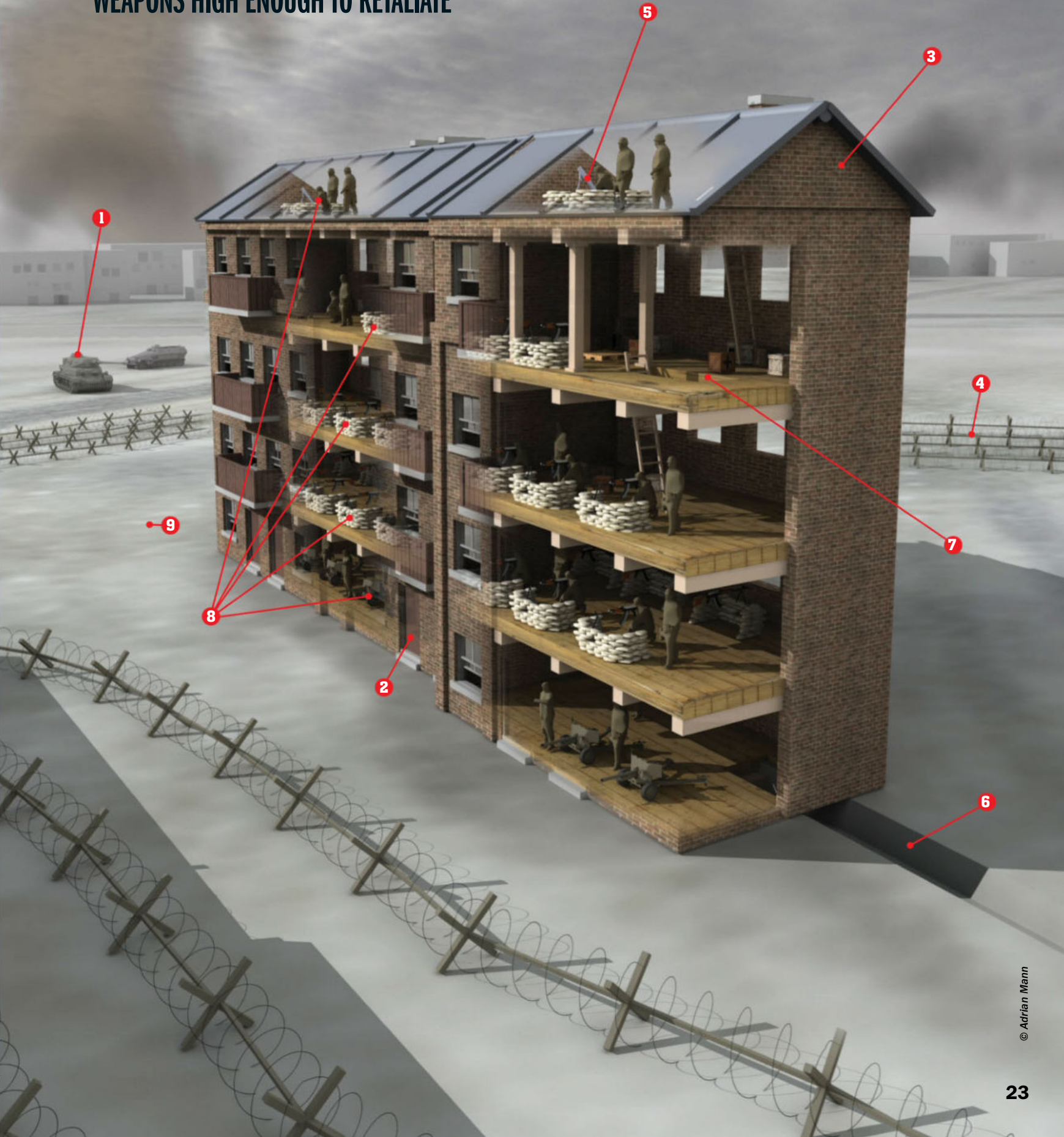
The Russian casualties were even worse, with possibly one million fatalities, including nearly all the men that Stalin had committed to early stage of the battle. However, the Soviet Union could replace these enormous losses, whereas the Germans could not. The loss of a complete army group and its equipment meant that the Germans could neither sustain their advance into Russia nor cope with the eventual Russian counterattack. Hitler was furious, and angrily recognised that, "The God of War has gone over to the other side."



A German soldier is marched into captivity. 91,000 Wehrmacht soldiers were taken prisoners by the Red Army at Stalingrad



**“WHEN TANKS APPROACH WITHIN 25 METRES OF THE BUILDING, THEIR THIN TURRET ARMOUR BECOMES EXPOSED TO ANTI-TANK FIRE FROM ABOVE BUT THEY ARE UNABLE TO ELEVATE THEIR WEAPONS HIGH ENOUGH TO RETALIATE”**





# ANATOMY OF THE STURMPANZER I

This self-propelled gun survived the Battle of France and the Invasion of Greece, but its swansong would come in the bitter fighting on the Eastern Front

## SELF-PROPELLED GUN

Despite being collectively grouped into the 'tank' family, the Sturmpanzer I was actually a mobile armoured cannon. The idea was to create a mobile platform that combined the armour of a tank with a powerful main gun to support infantry in the field.

FRONT ARMOUR IS 13MM THICK

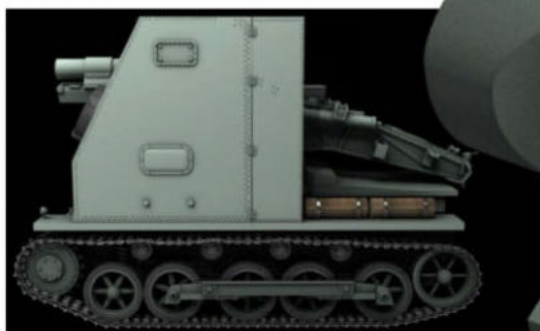
THE STURMPANZER I HAD A FIRE RATE OF THREE ROUNDS PER MINUTE

## HEAVY WEAPONRY

The formidable Panzer IV may have been a more of an all-round war vehicle – thus forming the core of the Nazi's mobile artillery – but the Sturmpanzer had a far more powerful and destructive main armament, the sIG 33, that fired huge 15cm shells.

## A RARE SIGHT

Produced in February 1940, the original Sturmpanzer had a smaller run at only 38 individual units. These units were split among a number of different battalions, including six Panzer divisions during the Battle of France.





### FIRING HIGH

The Sturmpanzer I may have been compact, but its design inexplicably placed the cannon much higher than other armoured vehicles. Meaning the gunner often had to compensate while aiming in battle. This proved to be one of the Sturmpanzer I's biggest problems.

### NO SECONDARY FIRE

Later versions of the Sturmpanzer would utilise a secondary weapon in the form of the meaty MG 34, but the first incarnation had no other weapons save the sIG 33 cannon that was re-appropriated for the vehicle design of the Sturmpanzer I.

### BATTLE-HARDENED

Despite its many technical faults, the Bison saw action across multiple battlefields in World War II. It was involved in the bloody Battle of France in 1940, the invasion of the Balkans in Operation Marita, and Operation Barbarossa in 1941.

**WEIGHS 8.5 TONNES**

### NO ROOM FOR AMMUNITION

The original version of the Sturmpanzer was smaller than the incarnations that would follow in later generations, and with little to no space inside the vehicle, extra ammunition was carried behind it in a separate vehicle.

**“DESPITE BEING COLLECTIVELY GROUPED INTO THE ‘TANK’ FAMILY, THE STURMPANZER I WAS ACTUALLY A MOBILE ARMoured CANNON”**

## ARMoured WARFARE ON THE STREETS

Serious overloading of the chassis meant that the Sturmpanzer wasn't designed for off-road warfare. As many accounts of these armoured vehicles breaking down in rural areas (especially in wet weather) should testify, the Sturmpanzer was a mobile cannon that Hitler wanted for urban assaults.

Its rounds were powerful enough to blow straight through walls, so the Nazis often used them to clear out Allied roadblocks. However, while these mobile cannons often cleared obstacles or destroyed gun nests, they also attracted the most fire so the German infantry would often hold back until the vehicle had cleared the vicinity before engaging.



*Above: Operation Barbarossa would see nearly all of the remaining Bisons destroyed, giving way to another iteration of self-propelled guns*

### EXPOSED CREW

The basic crew of a Sturmpanzer I consisted of four or five men, but only three could fit inside the small armoured compartment of the vehicle. For the rest of the crew left to load the cannon, that meant being exposed out in the open during battle.

### NEED FOR SPEED

The original Sturmpanzer was designed specifically to work in urban environments, and its six-cylinder, water-cooled Maybach NL38TR engine could produce up to 40 km/h. This made it as fast as a Panzer IV, but unlike its bigger brother, the Sturmpanzer I struggled off-road.



# WHY DID THE INVASION FAIL?

Historian and author, Roger Moorhouse, discusses how a frozen apocalypse helped to destroy the Third Reich



Hitler's Pact with Stalin, 1939-1941, explains what contributed to the Nazi defeat and how the war with the Soviet Union led to a decisive Allied victory.

## DESPITE INFLECTING HUGE CASUALTIES, WHY WAS THERE NO DECISIVE GERMAN VICTORY BEFORE THE RUSSIAN WINTER SET IN?

As the Poles, Swedes and Napoleon all learned to their cost, invading Russia is a tricky business. Germany, in 1941, had some distinct advantages. Not least a marked superiority in technology and in trained manpower, it also benefited from the new military doctrine of Blitzkrieg [Lightning War], which had proved highly effective and was now fully developed and understood by its practitioners.

But, though militarily revolutionary, Blitzkrieg was politically rather conventional – it worked by disrupting and swiftly defeating the enemy in the field, thereby forcing a political surrender, either due to the loss of the defender's capital,

Operation Barbarossa was arguably the greatest turning point in World War II and changed global history but at a dreadful cost. Here, Roger Moorhouse, author of *The Devils' Alliance:*

or the loss of his army. In the case of the Soviet Union, it worked militarily as it should: decimating the Red Army in the field, causing enormous casualties and capturing vast swathes of territory – yet it was unable to force a political defeat.

This was due to the vast distances involved – Moscow was over 500 miles from the German-Soviet frontier – and the huge resources of men and materiel that the Soviet Union, despite its predicament, could still muster. To defeat his enemy, Hitler needed to force both a military and political collapse of the USSR, and this he was simply unable to do.

## HOW KEY WAS THE RUSSIAN WINTER CONDITIONS TO CONTRIBUTING TO THE GERMAN DEFEAT?

The winter was a challenge even for the hardiest Soviet natives, but for German soldiers fighting in summer uniforms it could be deadly. Men froze at their posts, guns jammed and engines seized in their vehicles. Fighting became impossible, and the logistical difficulties of supplying troops with spare parts, food and ammunition, were exacerbated. The German Eastern Front medal was known colloquially as the 'Order of the Frozen Flesh'.

However, it is not fair to say that the winter alone defeated the Germans; it merely compounded their existing difficulties. When the Wehrmacht advanced to within sight of the

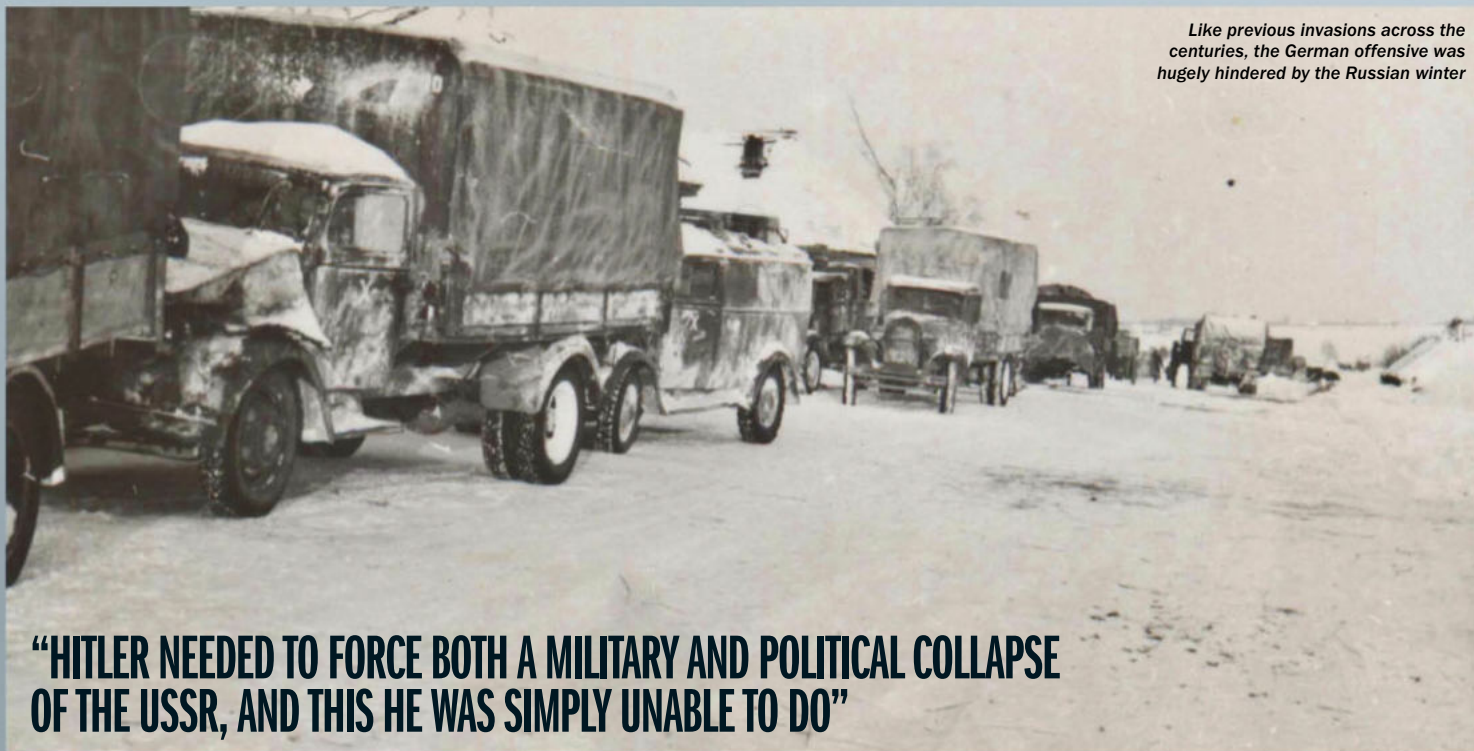
Kremlin in November 1941, they were fighting at the end of a logistical chain of supply that could stretch a thousand miles, much of which ran along unmade roads. That would challenge their fighting capacity even in the best of circumstances, but in the teeth of a Russian winter – or even in the muddy quagmire of the autumn rains – it was crippling.

## WAS THERE A SOVIET CONTINGENCY PLAN TO CARRY ON FIGHTING IF LENINGRAD AND STALINGRAD FELL?

The campaign on the Eastern Front was no conventional conflict – no quarter was given and none expected; it was very much a fight to the death – either Nazism or Communism would prevail, the other would be destroyed. So, it would have made little difference to the Soviets if Leningrad, Stalingrad, or even Moscow had fallen. The fight would have carried on.

Stalin had made the regime's intentions clear early in the German invasion, when he began the wholesale shift of Soviet heavy machinery, as well as the state apparatus and administration eastwards, out of the range of the German invaders. The entire government, for instance, was moved to Kuybyshev (now Samara), 500 miles east of Moscow.

Stalin also ordered the start of partisan operations behind German lines, decreeing it to be a duty of every Red Army soldier to continue resisting to his last breath. In such



Like previous invasions across the centuries, the German offensive was hugely hindered by the Russian winter

**"HITLER NEEDED TO FORCE BOTH A MILITARY AND POLITICAL COLLAPSE OF THE USSR, AND THIS HE WAS SIMPLY UNABLE TO DO"**



## “STALIN ALSO ORDERED THE START OF PARTISAN OPERATIONS BEHIND GERMAN LINES, DECREERING IT TO BE A DUTY OF EVERY RED ARMY SOLDIER TO CONTINUE RESISTING TO HIS LAST BREATH”

circumstances, the loss of cities – even of the major cities – would have made little difference, the war would have continued; if necessary as a protracted and bloody guerrilla conflict.

### HOW DID THE RUSSIANS SUCCESSFULLY COUNTERATTACK?

Some of it was down to General Georgy Zhukov, who was appointed commander of the western (Muscovite) front in early October 1941. Zhukov had masterminded the Soviet victory against the Japanese at Khalkhin Gol in 1939 and he would be instrumental in the defence of Moscow two years later.

Under his guidance, the Red Army had been carefully hoarding men and materiel for months, sending just enough troops to the front to avoid a collapse while building up a huge strategic reserve of 58 divisions. Of these, 18 were well-trained Siberian units – winter warfare specialists – who were transferred westwards in mid-October, once Stalin was sure that Siberia was secure from Japanese attack.

This course of events is probably one of the reasons that the Germans were so convinced that the Red Army was at breaking point in November. But, those fresh troops would parade past Stalin in a snowstorm on Red Square that month, and continue out beyond Moscow's western suburbs to face German forces, many of whom were at the end of their physical endurance.

*The Wehrmacht's superior training and equipment could not prevent the logistical and weather demands of the Russian terrain*



In this way, the Red Army gained a vital edge in the crucial Battle for Moscow and enabled their first winter counteroffensive to push the Germans back and save the Soviet capital.

### DID THE GERMANS' DELIBERATE POLICY OF COMMITTING ATROCITIES INSIDE RUSSIAN TERRITORY BECOME A DETRIMENT TO THEIR OVERALL MILITARY OBJECTIVES?

Absolutely, and on many levels. It tied up large numbers of troops behind the lines who were engaged in the anti-partisan operations, by which civilians and others were routinely slaughtered. In addition, the rigid application of Nazi racial policy robbed the many groups of disaffected Soviet citizens – particularly the Ukrainian nationalists and Byelorussians amongst others – of their argument that by welcoming the Nazis as liberators they might be able to throw off the hated Soviet yoke.

Germany's merciless racial war in the occupied USSR; its policy of destruction, rape and mass murder, was not only a crime

against humanity, it was an enormous missed opportunity for Berlin, as millions of potential supporters against Stalin were thereby alienated. Potentially, these supporters may have held the key to the ultimate political defeat of the Soviet Union, however the German invaders were too blinded by their racism, too obsessed with exterminating the *untermensch*, to see the political potential of their victims.

### MANY HISTORIANS AGREE THAT OPERATION BARBAROSSA WAS ARGUABLY THE DEFINITIVE TURNING POINT OF THE WAR. IS THIS CORRECT OR CAN THE WESTERN ALLIES CLAIM SOME LEGITIMATE CREDIT AS WELL?

Given that roughly 85 per cent of all German losses, and fully 80 per cent of all German combat deaths occurred on the Eastern Front, it would be rather foolish to try to claim that any other front or campaign of the European war was more decisive. Operation Barbarossa, as the opening phase of that campaign, must therefore be considered to be a vital turning point. More importantly, Barbarossa opens a Pandora's Box of atrocity and brutality in World War II.

Whereas both the Nazis and the Soviets had already behaved abominably up to that point – the Germans with mass murders and deportations in Poland and the Balkans, the Soviets in their treatment of newly subject populations in Poland and the Baltic states – Barbarossa begins the ideologically driven race war between the two; arguably the conflict that Berlin had been itching to launch.

From there, the gloves are off; atrocity follows atrocity from Berlin to Stalingrad, to Leningrad and a thousand nameless places in between, before finally being visited back upon the German people.

The fact that Soviet deaths in World War II are still disputed – and have been estimated as high as 25 million plus – should make us all pause for a moment to contemplate the sheer murderous horror of that war.

Barbarossa was the start of that most murderous phase, and so must be regarded as one of the undoubted turning points of World War II.

*This scene of destruction was repeated countless times over throughout occupied areas of the Soviet Union*







## Heroes of the Victoria Cross

# FRANCIS HARVEY

The Battle of Jutland was perhaps the greatest naval battle in history. During the 36-hour clash, around 100,000 sailors in 250 ships fought for control of the North Sea. 25 ships were sunk and over 8,500 sailors lost their lives, including one man who sacrificed himself to save his crew

WORDS ALICE ROBERTS-PRATT

At just after 4pm, on 31 May 1916, HMS Lion was hit with a lethal barrage of German shells. The colossal naval battle off the coast of Jutland had been raging for only just over an hour, with German and British ships pounding one another with devastating firepower that would eventually obliterate some 25 vessels. Crippled, the HMS Lion and its 1,000 crew were now seemingly doomed to meet a similar end, as fire threatened to ignite one of its turret's ammunition stores. The quick actions of one Marine, however, would change everything.

Francis Harvey was born on 29 April 1873 in Upper Sydenham, Kent. He was descended from a military family, being the son of Commander John William Francis Harvey and the grandson of Captain John Harvey of the 9th Regiment of Foot, great-grandson of Admiral Sir Edward Harvey and great-great-grandson of John Harvey who was killed in the Glorious First of June in 1794.

In 1884, Harvey and his family moved to Southsea, Hampshire, where he attended Portsmouth Grammar School. He flourished in language and debating and achieved excellent academic results. When he left school he decided to follow in the footsteps of his family, choosing a military career and elected to attend the Royal Naval College Greenwich as a Royal Marines Officer cadet, turning down a place at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

Graduating in 1892, he was made a full lieutenant, the following year joining HMS Wildfire as his first commission at sea. He was

at sea for just one year before he was back on shore again attending gunnery courses at HMS Excellent and qualifying in 1896 as an instructor first class in naval gunnery.

### The Instructor of Gunnery

In 1898, Harvey was serving aboard the newly commissioned cruiser HMS Phaeton, to which he was appointed the previous year. The same year, he returned home and assumed the role of Assistant Instructor for Gunnery at Plymouth Division, serving aboard HMS Edgar and HMS Diadem, attached to the Channel Fleet. It was during this time that the young Harvey would practice his gunnery skills.

On 28 January 1900, Harvey was promoted to captain and embarked on a string of postings to

HMS Royal Sovereign, HMS Duke of Edinburgh, HMS St George and the new battle cruiser, HMS Inflexible. Throughout, he taught gunnery to the heavy units of the Channel Fleet and became Instructor of Gunnery at Chatham Dockyard in 1910. He was subsequently promoted to major, with one report on the gunnery school claiming:

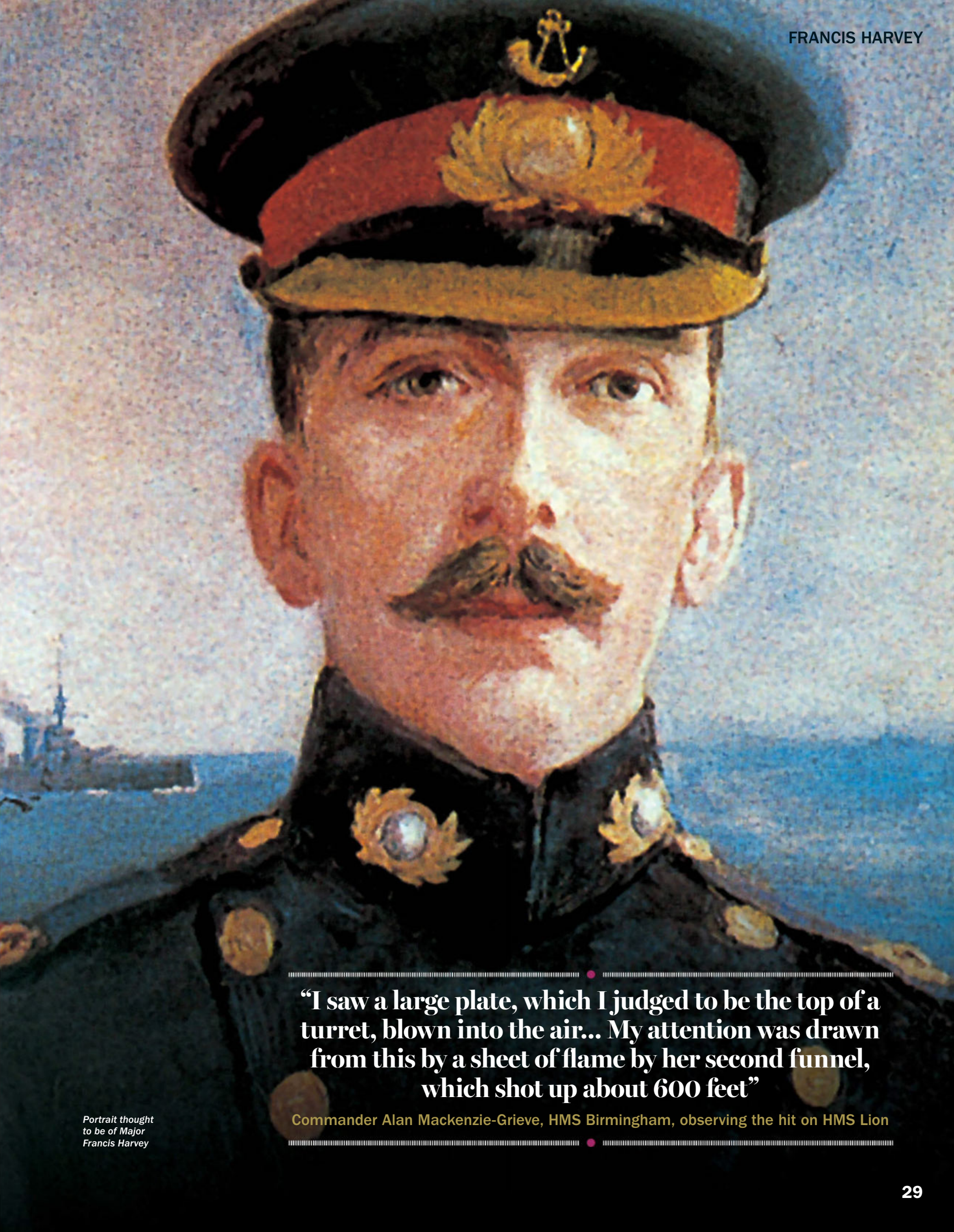
"[The] degree of efficiency in [the] Gunnery Establishment at Chatham is very high both as regards general training and attention to detail. Great credit is due [to] all concerned particularly to Major FJW Harvey, the I of G."

This report with its high praise earned Harvey a promotion to senior marine officer on HMS Lion, the flagship of the British battle cruiser fleet. This was to be Harvey's last and most significant posting.

*HMS Lion, Princess and Queen Mary at the Battle of Jutland*







**“I saw a large plate, which I judged to be the top of a turret, blown into the air... My attention was drawn from this by a sheet of flame by her second funnel, which shot up about 600 feet”**

**Commander Alan Mackenzie-Grieve, HMS Birmingham, observing the hit on HMS Lion**

*Portrait thought  
to be of Major  
Francis Harvey*



## Joining HMS Lion

Lion, under the command of Admiral David Beatty, was armed with eight 13.5 inch guns and Harvey's office was positioned under 'Q' turret where he directed the guns operation and fire. As well as his duties here, however, he continued to serve as the senior marine officer on board right through his first military campaign, World War I.

It was not long before Harvey saw action. At the Battle of Heligoland Bight on 28 August 1914, HMS Lion, HMS Queen Mary and HMS Princess Royal sped into the Heligoland Bight, joining the British and German forces already engaged in an embittered fight. Luckily, due to the poor weather, Beatty's battle cruisers were able to surprise and destroy SMS Cölin and SMS Ariadne, with Harvey's guns scoring many of the hits.

On 24 January 1915, Harvey once again saw action when he faced Rear Admiral Franz von Hipper and his German battle cruiser squadron who had crossed the North Sea and repeatedly bombarded British coastal towns including Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby. The British and German squadrons came to blows at the Battle of Dogger Bank.

During the fight one of HMS Lion's shots hit one of SMS Seydlitz's turrets. A huge explosion ensued, destroying the adjacent turret and killing 160 men. The German flagship only survived due to the actions of sailor Wilhelm Heidkamp, who flooded the magazines. This action would later be mirrored by Harvey on the HMS Lion.

After the battle, he continued to serve aboard HMS Lion at Rosyth into May 1916, resuming his gunnery training and preparing for major fleet action.

The HMS Queen Mary's magazines detonate, causing the ship to be ripped apart



## 'Der Tag' arrives

In the event of war, Britain had long-standing plans to blockade Germany economically, cutting off vital imports from the Americas. A 'distant blockade' was planned, keeping the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands. This gave Germany access to the North Sea, but Britain could still capture or sink her merchant ships.

In January 1916, Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer took command of the German High Seas Fleet and swiftly devised a plan to provoke the British into making a mistake.

Hipper's battle cruisers were to attack British convoys of merchant ships en route to neutral Norway. Scheer expected Beatty to engage Hipper with his Battle Cruiser Fleet from Rosyth, to be joined later by Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe from Scapa Flow. German submarines would ambush the emerging fleets, and Hipper would engage Beatty and lure him towards the main High Seas Fleet. Destroying Beatty's force first would give the Germans equality in numbers. Only after this would the German fleet steam from its base at Wilhelmshaven and break the British blockade in a great confrontation that the German navy called 'Der Tag' (The Day).

A civilian code-breaking team known as 'Room 40' got wind of the German raid and the Grand Fleet put to sea. Unfortunately, the report was later amended to indicate that the Germans were still in harbour, so although Jellicoe and Beatty were already at sea on 30 May 1916, before Scheer left Germany, neither expected a battle. Scheer and Hipper were unclear if the British were at sea, but the whole plan was supposed to bring about a battle.

First contact was at 2.28pm when HMS Galatea, a British scouting cruiser in Beatty's force, spotted some of Hipper's ships. The battle had begun. Beatty's six battle cruisers had been strengthened with the 5th Battle Squadron's four fast, powerful 'superdreadnought' battleships, but they were five miles away and did not see Beatty's signals to join him. Hipper turned away, drawing Beatty south towards the High Seas Fleet.

Hipper had time to prepare and was ready for Beatty. By 3.48pm the Germans were within range and fired first, with the shells ruthlessly hammering the British ships. At 4pm SMS

Major Harvey's Victoria Cross citation praising his heroic actions

*Major Francis John William Harvey, R. M. L. I.,*

*Officer Commanding Royal Marines Detachment*

**H. M. S. Lion**

*Battle of Jutland*

*31<sup>st</sup> May 1916.*

## Citation

*"Whilst mortally wounded and almost the only survivor after the explosion of an enemy shell in 'D' Gun house with great presence of mind and devotion to duty ordered the magazine to be flooded, thereby saving the ship. He died shortly afterwards."*



“There was a terrific explosion forward... I could see nothing for about a minute and then all cleared away as the foremost part of the ship went under water”

Midshipman Peregrine Dearden,  
HMS Queen Mary

An artist's depiction of the Battle of Jutland captures the chaos and intense fighting that occurred

## HMS LION (BATTLE CRUISER)

**LAUNCHED:** 6 AUGUST 1910

**DISPLACEMENT:** 26,690 TONS (DESIGN LOAD)

**LENGTH:** 700FT (213.4M)

**SPEED:** 52KM/H (32MPH; 28 KNOTS)

**COMPLEMENT:** 1,092 MEN

**ARMAMENT:** 4 X 2 - BL 13.5IN MK V GUNS; 16 X 1 - BL 4IN MK VII GUNS; 2 X 1 - 21IN MK II SUBMERGED TORPEDO TUBES

**ARMOUR, BARBETTES:** 229-203MM (9-8IN), BELT: 229-102MM (9-4IN)

**BULKHEADS:** 102MM (4IN); CONNING TOWER: 254MM (10IN); DECK: 64MM (2.5IN); TURRETS: 229MM (9IN)





**“In the long glorious history of the Royal Marines there is no name or deed which, in its character or consequences ranks above this”**

**Winston Churchill**

Lützow bombarded HMS Lion with nine shells, one of which hit the right top corner of the left hand gun port at the junction of the faceplate and the roof. This pierced a section of the 9-inch faceplate and penetrated Lion's 'Q' turret, detonating and causing a lethal fire that could not be extinguished.

All those who were stationed in the gun house were either killed or wounded by the first explosion. Harvey, who was suffering from severe burns and injuries, noticed that the shell hoist that led to the ship's main forward magazine had been jammed open. With the explosive shells left exposed like this, the flash fire would race down towards the magazine, resulting in a cataclysmic explosion that would destroy the ship, killing everyone on board.

Harvey, mortally wounded and suffering from shock, dragged himself through the carnage and debris of Q turret over to the voice pipe and gave the order for the magazine doors to be closed and the compartments to be flooded. This action would stop the cordite in the magazines from detonating.

Harvey turned to the one man still standing, his sergeant, and commanded him to go to the bridge and deliver a full report to the captain of the ship, Ernle Chatfield, a standard practice in damage exercises. Shortly afterwards Francis Harvey collapsed and died of his wounds – he was just 43.

The sergeant immediately followed his instructions and went to the bridge to inform the captain of Harvey's actions. The captain quickly ordered the closure of Q magazine doors and the flooding of the compartments.

This order passed through the Transmitting Station underneath the armoured deck where Stoker 1st Class William Yeo carried out the



*A battleship of the Imperial German Navy delivers a devastating volley*

instructions within minutes of the hit. HMS Lion, and its roughly 1,000-strong crew, were saved.

Unfortunately, many of the other ships were not so lucky. HMS Indefatigable suffered a succession of magazine explosions, tearing the ship apart and losing 1,013 men. HMS Queen Mary detonated in a great plume of smoke taking with her 1,275 lives.

At 6.30pm, a shell penetrated the midships turret of Rear Admiral Horace Hood's flagship HMS Invincible, the original battle cruiser, almost out-of-date by 1916. Again the flash raced down into the magazines and the midships section vanished in a huge explosion, killing Hood and over a thousand men.

### **“To him we owed our lives”**

In the latter part of the battle, the scorched body of Major Francis Harvey was removed from the ruins of Q turret. He and 98 of his fellow crewmembers were buried at sea with full honours. The bravery and courage that Harvey showed in the face of certain death was not ignored.

In Admiral Jellicoe's post-battle dispatch Harvey was mentioned by name. More importantly, Harvey became the first Marine to be posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest award for courage 'in the face of the enemy', which was presented by King George V to his widow Ethel at Buckingham Palace on 15 September 1916.

The medal group was loaned to the Royal Marines Museum, Eastney in 1973 by his son Lieutenant-Colonel John Malcolm Harvey of

the King's Regiment. Harvey's name adorns the Chatham Naval Memorial to those with no known grave, governed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

25 ships were sunk and dozens damaged at the Battle of Jutland. Both navies learned important lessons and redesigned their ships. Of those sailors who died, 6,094 were British and 2,551 German. Most went down with their ships or were buried at sea; only a few have marked graves. The British were mostly buried in the naval cemetery at Lyness in Orkney, or in scattered graves around the Scandinavian coast. The German dead mostly lie in the naval cemetery at Wilhelmshaven.

Over a thousand sailors on both sides returned home with injuries, often life-changing. Many more would have been psychologically damaged, in an era when conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder were poorly understood. A total of 177 British sailors became prisoners of war in a naval camp at Brandenburg-an-der-Havel, near Berlin.

The Imperial (later Commonwealth) War Graves Commission recorded the names of sailors with no known grave on Memorials to the Missing, in the ports of Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth.

The German navy saw Jutland as the start of a tradition, naming a number of warships after Jutland heroes. After the war, the anniversary was commemorated in both countries.

Images: Alamy, Mary Evans, National Museum of the Royal Navy



## **36 HOURS: JUTLAND 1916, THE BATTLE THAT WON THE WAR**

To commemorate the centenary of the Battle of Jutland, The National Museum of the Royal Navy in partnership with Imperial War Museums are staging '36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle That Won the War', the largest and most comprehensive exhibition ever on the subject, highlighting the essential role of the Royal Navy in winning World War I. Sitting alongside over 200 Jutland related artefacts are objects belonging to and associated with Francis Harvey and HMS Lion.

Objects include Harvey's Victoria Cross and Ceremonial Sword, a piece of Armour plate from a bulkhead in 'Q' Turret which is inscribed in memory of Francis Harvey and the other men who lost their lives, a German shell splinter recovered from Lion and the medals awarded to Captain Francis Jones, RMLI who discovered the charred body of Francis Harvey.

The exhibition opens 19 May 2016. For more information, visit: [www.nmm.org.uk/36-hours](http://www.nmm.org.uk/36-hours)





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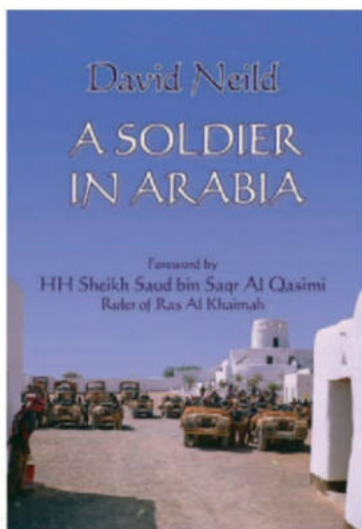


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David Neild

Foreword by HH Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi  
Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah

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# MUSSOLINI'S DOWNFALL

Once the most powerful man in Italy, Il Duce met his end fleeing his country in disguise as the war drew to its bitter end

WORDS DAVID SMITH

**T**he hunched figure in the back of the German truck might not have merited a second glance had he not been wearing sunglasses. The Luftwaffe corporal, resting his chin on the sub-machine gun between his knees, was certainly not what the partisans of the 52nd Garibaldi Brigade were looking for. They were intent only on finding any fugitive Italians within the small column of German troops heading for home.

However, the sunglasses – worn on a cloudy day – attracted attention and a closer examination of the German corporal revealed the unmistakable features of Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini, former Prime Minister and dictator of Italy. It was 27 April 1945, and the story of 'Il Duce' ('the leader'), was coming to its conclusion.

## The slow defeat

Mussolini had long sensed that his end was near. The war, never popular in Italy, had been going badly for some time. "From October 1942," he had commented, referring to the Allied victory at El Alamein, "I had a constant and growing presentiment of the crisis which was to overwhelm me."

In truth, it did not take a political savant to see that trouble was brewing. The Italian role in World War II had often bordered on the farcical. Very much a junior partner to the Germans, Italy had only declared war on France once it had been conquered. Subsequent military operations – including those in Albania and Greece – had been botched to the extent that German forces had been required to bail the Italians out.

A crossroads had been reached in May 1943, when the Allied victory in Tunisia removed Axis forces from North Africa. A difference of opinion divided the British and Americans at this point; the Americans favouring a concentration of force for the invasion of German-occupied France, while the British advocated delaying that and keeping the pressure on Germany through its weaker partner.

The British plan prevailed, and Italy faced an uncertain future, but there was still hope that a destructive campaign on the Italian mainland might be avoided. As the first Allied strike began, against Sicily in July, one thing was clear; Il Duce's days as dictator were all but over. At a meeting of his own Grand Council, in the sweltering heat of a late July day and into the night, Il Duce was voted out of office.

Realising that he could ignore the vote of the council, he remained determined to hang on to power. His fate was sealed the next day, however, when he was arrested by the King, Victor Emmanuel III. Although the whole process was so polite and peaceful, Mussolini apparently failed to understand what was really happening to him.

On the day of his 60th birthday, Il Duce was in captivity on the island of Ponza, before being moved to an impressive suite at the Hotel Campo Imperatore, 1,800 metres up the Gran Sasso mountain in the Apennines.

## Italian surrender

Nobody, on either side, had any doubts that Italy would now try to extricate itself from the war. The critical factor in the tragic events that followed would be the German ability to act on that realisation.

While the Allies bogged themselves down in negotiations with the new government – led by Marshal Pietro Badoglio – over the terms of an Italian surrender, the Germans were already quietly moving troops into Italy.

When the inevitable armistice between Italy and the Allies was announced, the Germans were ready with Operation Achse, which saw German troops replace Italians in southern France, the Balkans and the Aegean. They also immediately disarmed more than half a million Italian troops in their native country – a staggering 56 divisions of the Italian Army were simply dismantled.

*Below: Italian partisans, aligned with the Action Party, patrol the streets of Milan after the city's liberation*





*Right: Mussolini was the figurehead of a cult of personality and represented the unifying force in Italian fascism*

**"MUSSOLINI HAD LONG  
SENSED THAT HIS END  
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BADLY FOR SOME TIME"**





## MUSSOLINI'S DOWNFALL

The Allies had clearly miscalculated the German response, but worse was to come. Rather than digging in on a defensive line to the north of Rome, as expected, the Germans chose to resist the Allied invasion. Getting underway just hours after the declaration of the armistice, on 9 September, the Allied landings at Salerno were fiercely contested from the start. Under Albert Kesselring, the Germans were prepared to make Allied forces pay for every inch of Italian territory they gained.

Mussolini was in a state of limbo at this point. Describing himself as, "a corpse whose death they hesitate to announce," he appeared to have lost the energy and passion that had marked out his early career.

Under the terms of the negotiations with the Allies, he was meant to have been handed over when the invasion began, but the German response had been so swift that panic had struck the new Italian regime. Along with the King, Badoglio and the rest of the government had fled south from Rome on 9 September, forgetting all about the deposed dictator, whose life and career was about to enter its final, humiliating phase.

12 gliders, carrying over 100 German commandos, were dispatched to 'rescue' Mussolini, who was forced to leave his comfortable hotel in a dangerously overloaded Stork reconnaissance plane. Two days later, he was meeting the Führer.

Hitler offered Mussolini a stark choice – either accept a position at the head of a new

Italian government in northern Italy, or face the consequences. "Northern Italy," the Führer warned, "will be forced to envy the fate of Poland if you do not accept to give renewed vigour to the alliance between Germany and Italy, by becoming head of the state and of the new government."

So began the last phase of Mussolini's career, as the head of a puppet regime. If he had felt like a corpse before, he was little more than a zombie now.

### The Allies creep closer

Many Italians had hoped that the armistice with the Allies would mean an end to their war. This was perhaps naïve, but few would have guessed that their struggle was just beginning.

Germany could not allow the Allies to simply occupy a section of Italy and use it as a launch pad for strikes against the Fatherland. The removal of the Italians as a fighting partner, however their abilities were viewed, was nevertheless a major blow and Germany would soon be fighting on three desperately hard fronts as the long-anticipated invasion of Europe neared.

The first Italians to wake up to the reality of the new situation were the soldiers themselves. More than 600,000 became prisoners of war, with the bulk of them shipped to Germany to work as forced labour, while around 200,000 took the alternative of joining the German Army.

Atrocities were common, most notably on the island of Cephallonia, where Italian troops made



*Above: Il Duce's control over Italy became absolute in 1925 when he dissolved the democratic government*

the mistake of resisting the Germans. More than a thousand were killed in the one-sided fighting that followed, and 5,000 survivors were then systematically massacred.

The Allied offensive from Salerno made slow progress, but had driven the Germans back to a major defensive line by January 1944. Three assaults were launched on the town of Cassino, one of the keystones of the Gustav Line, but the German defences could not be breached. The war had entered a brutal, attritional phase and the Italians found themselves bystanders caught between two destructive forces.

**"MANY ITALIANS HAD HOPED THAT THE ARMISTICE WITH THE ALLIES WOULD MEAN AN END TO THEIR WAR. THIS WAS PERHAPS NAÏVE, BUT FEW WOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT THEIR STRUGGLE WAS JUST BEGINNING"**

*Below: Mussolini pictured with German and Italian troops in 1944. Units were receiving training in Germany to continue the fight against the Allies*





# "GERMANY IS TRULY YOUR FRIEND"

TURNING THEIR BACKS ON NAZI GERMANY HAD DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ITALIANS

Posters may have declared that the Italians had nothing to fear from their long-time partners in the 'Pact of Steel', but the truth was very different.

Upon surrendering, Italy became nothing more than a source of men and materials for Germany, to be plundered at will. Factories were packed up and shipped out of the country and Italy was even forced to pay 10 million lire per month as expenses. Even food was taken for German soldiers, leaving many on the brink of starvation.

As well as the territory of the new Mussolini-headed government, the RSI, Germany also effectively annexed territories in the north east of the country, which conveniently coincided with territory taken from Austria at the end of World War I. An 'adviser', Rudolph Rahn, was installed as German Ambassador to the RSI, further undermining Mussolini's power.

*Right: 'Here are the liberators', a propaganda poster demonising the US for its party in bombing campaigns*

**"UPON ITS SURRENDER TO THE ALLIES, ITALY BECAME NOTHING MORE THAN A SOURCE OF MEN AND MATERIALS FOR THE GERMANS, TO BE PLUNDERED AT WILL"**



*The slaughter at Grotto Via Ardeatina was carried out by an SS unit, as revenge for partisan activity*



For some, simply standing by and watching was unthinkable, but the understandable desire to do something to respond to the situation would lead Italy into the murky depths of a civil war.

### Resistance erupts

Partisan groups had sprung up spontaneously on the declaration of the armistice with the Allies, with an estimated 10,000 civilians arming themselves and forming loosely organised groups. A two-day resistance was also staged at Rome until the Germans threatened to raze the city.

Around 50,000 prisoners of war, mostly from Yugoslavia, were also thrown into the mix when the Italians guarding them simply left their posts. Many headed for the hills and the mountains to join partisan groups.

Such groups were small in number at the start of the war, possibly comprising as few as

## **"PARTISAN GROUPS HAD SPRUNG UP SPONTANEOUSLY ON THE DECLARATION OF THE ARMISTICE WITH THE ALLIES, WITH AN ESTIMATED 10,000 CIVILIANS ARMING THEMSELVES AND FORMING LOOSELY ORGANISED GROUPS"**

a dozen men. After the armistice was signed in September 1943, the number of active partisans in Italy would rise sharply.

Following Mussolini's removal, previously banned political parties stepped out of the shadows to form partisan groups with fervent ideological grounding. Almost half of these groups were communists, known as 'Garibaldi Brigades'. The Action Party was the next largest faction, but there were also partisans fighting for the aims of the Socialists, Christian Democrats, Labour Democrats and Liberals, as

well as some who spurned any sort of political affiliation at all, such as the Stella Rossa, the 'Red Star Brigade'.

The six major anti-fascist parties organised themselves into the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale, or Committee of National Liberation (CLN), aiming to co-ordinate resistance to the German occupation and Italian fascist groups. Many of these had sprung up at the same time as Mussolini's new government. Fascist militia, in the form of the Guardia Nazionale Repubblicana (GNR), worked to counter the



*Mussolini's popularity declined rapidly as the Allies advanced up the Italian mainland*



*A young soldier is comforted during an inspection of a paramilitary Black Brigade*



*Mussolini spent the last two years of his life as a puppet figurehead of the Italian Social Republic*



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**07 MUSSOLINI'S CAPTURE**  
On 27 April 1945, while attempting to flee Italy as German forces crumble under the Allied onslaught, Mussolini is captured by the 52nd Garibaldi Brigade, near the village of Dongo and the Swiss border. A day later, he is executed.

**03 RSI SET UP**  
Mussolini's only function from September 1943 is as the head of a puppet regime in northern Italy, effectively supported, organised and run by the Germans. Based at Salò, Mussolini has no power and virtually no influence left.

## 04 ANTI-PARTISAN OPERATIONS

March 1944 sees an increase in the number and scale of operations against Italian partisans. Forces comprised of both German and Italian fascist units strike in a series of raids (known as 'rastrellamentos') in northern Italy, with partisan casualties often reaching the hundreds.

## 06 THE LIBERATION OF ROME

On 4 June 1944, just two days before the Normandy Landings on D-Day, the American Fifth Army liberates Rome. Controversy still remains over the American commander's determination to reach Rome first, which may have cost the Allies the chance of bottling up AOK 10.

## 05 BREAKTHROUGH AT CASSINO

After three previous assaults on the area around Cassino fail, the Allies finally break through the Gustav Line, with II Polish Corps to the fore, in May 1944. Tantalisingly, it looks as if the entire German 10th Army (AOK 10) might be trapped, but the opportunity is lost.

## 02 THE ALLIES INVADE

Just hours after the surrender of Italian forces to the Allies, landings begin at Salerno on 9 September 1943. The strength of German resistance surprises the Allies, who make slow progress and are then stalled by defensive works along the Gustav Line. A typically harsh Italian winter does not help.

## 01 MUSSOLINI DEPOSED

The path to Italy's eventual surrender to the Allies lies open following the ousting of Benito Mussolini. Taken into captivity at the Hotel Campo Imperatore, he is forgotten in the scramble to leave Rome in the face of the German advance upon the city and is rescued by German paratroopers.

FLORENCE

RIMINI

LEGHORN

ROME

PESCARA

L'AQUILA

ANZIO

CASSINO

FOGGIA

SALERNO

TARANTO

PALERMO

# THEATRE OF NIGHTMARES

ITALY WAS THE SETTING FOR SOME OF THE MOST BITTER FIGHTING OF THE ENTIRE WAR, AS WELL AS THE POLITICAL INTRIGUES BEHIND THE FALL OF MUSSOLINI

"THE PATH TO ITALY'S EVENTUAL SURRENDER TO THE ALLIES LIES OPEN FOLLOWING THE OUSTING OF BENITO MUSSOLINI"



**"THE SITUATION WAS SELDOM CLEAR-CUT, WITH MANY YOUNG MEN CHOOSING TO JOIN AN ORGANISED UNIT NOT THROUGH ANY POLITICAL OR IDEOLOGICAL CONVICTION, BUT SIMPLY OUT OF DESPERATION AND THE NEED FOR SOME FORM OF EMPLOYMENT"**

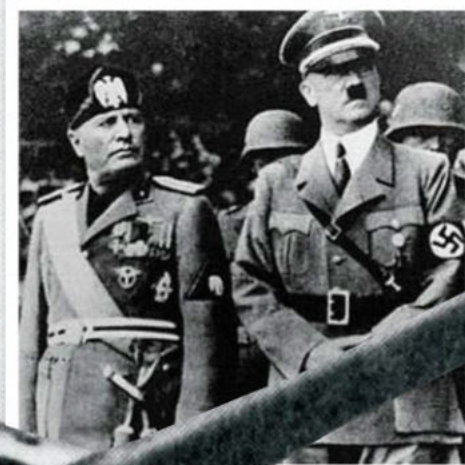
partisans, aided by the Gestapo, the SS security service, the military-based carabinieri police and barely controllable fascist gangs.

The situation was seldom clear-cut, with many young men choosing to join an organised unit not through any political or ideological conviction, but simply out of desperation and the need for some form of employment. Nevertheless, there were enough fanatics to ensure that fighting between the various factions was often savage.

Historians have long debated the effectiveness of the partisans, but there can be no doubt that they increased the scale of their activities as the Allied Italian campaign progressed. From less than 500 reported attacks in January 1944, there were more than 2,000 in March and more than 3,000 in June.

The attacks, especially when they targeted German soldiers, drew severe retribution. As a rule of thumb the Germans would execute ten prisoners or civilians for every German soldier killed by partisans.

Perhaps the most notorious reprisal followed a bombing in Rome, mounted by the communist Gruppi di Azione Patriottica Centrale (GAP Central). An 18 kilogram bomb was detonated as a company of SS soldiers marched by on 23 March 1944, instantly killing 28 of them.



**Above:** Hitler and Mussolini's relationship deteriorated as the war continued

**Left:** Mussolini giving his last speech in Milan, 1944, promising that German arms will turn the tide and condemning Bolshevism



A further five soldiers would succumb to their wounds the following day.

Furious, the Germans responded by rounding up Jews, communists, criminals and others that happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. The following day, in batches of five at a time, they were executed at the Ardeatine Caves, south of Rome. Brutal enough to start with, the executions became more cruel as the day progressed and some of the victims were actually beaten to death.

Inevitably, many groups turned their attentions away from the Germans and onto infrastructure – such as bridges and railway lines – or their fascist opponents, which did not draw such a strong response. The civilian population, warned by the Germans not to get involved and encouraged by the Allies to do just that, entered a terrifyingly uncertain phase, where retribution for an act of resistance could be delivered at any moment.

Severe supply shortages, caused by the campaign raging within the country, also led to an explosion of black market activity. In many places the situation approached anarchy as armed gangs simply robbed people and houses in order to sell the proceeds. The Allied forces, slowly inching their way up the country, also failed to deliver the level of provisions they

had previously promised. Even worse though, soldiers were known to indulge in the plunder and rape of the civilian population as they passed through.

### The hamstrung leader

Mussolini despaired at the brutal nature of the German occupation, but his new government was toothless. Based, humiliatingly, at Salò rather than Rome, the Repubblica Sociale Italiana (RSI) saw its various offices scattered over a wide area in a deliberate attempt to limit its ability to function efficiently.

Heaping further humiliation on Il Duce, he was granted a new army of just four divisions, and the bulk of them would need to come from new recruits. Only 12,000 officers and NCOs were allowed to return from Germany and conscription was required to fill out the new army's pitifully meagre ranks. This led to a surge in partisan numbers, as many young men preferred to take their chances in the mountains rather than obey their call-up orders.

Mussolini was not, however, a totally spent force. Falling back on his early career as a journalist, he became a prolific writer once more, churning out propaganda pieces that referred to the Allies as 'Anglo-American invaders' and contrasted their habit of

flattening Italian cities and towns with the way the Germans had left Rome intact after being driven out by the American Fifth Army in the June of 1944.

The Allied campaign had progressed remorselessly – following success in the fourth Battle of Cassino, in May 1944 – but there had been huge casualties on both sides as the Germans repeatedly fell back on new defensive lines. The diversion of German units from France to help the Normandy invasion, launched on 6 June (just after the fall of Rome), was the stated aim of the Italian campaign, but as many historians would later note, it was debatable who was tying down whom.

### A desperate escape

By the end of 1944, Mussolini was little more than a recluse, but he still had a little fight left in him. He formulated a plan to launch a counteroffensive using his precious four divisions, that failed to make any lasting gains against the allied advance.

In a last display of his old passion, Mussolini gave a speech in Milan in December, drawing rapturous applause from a packed crowd at the Teatro Lirico.

It was little more than a last hurrah. His German doctor declared, in February 1945,

**“MUSSOLINI DESPAIRED AT THE BRUTAL NATURE OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION, BUT HIS NEW GOVERNMENT WAS TOOTHLESS”**

## ITALY'S PARTISANS

ORGANISED RESISTANCE TO THE GERMANS AND ITALIAN FASCISTS CAME IN MANY FORMS

### GARIBALDI BRIGADES

With communist backgrounds, the Garibaldi brigades were the largest faction in the partisan landscape. Usually commanded by veterans of the Spanish Civil War, a brigade was nominally 100-300 strong, but numbers could be far higher and fluctuated wildly. Brigades actually lost effectiveness when numbers swelled, making them a bigger, slower target for anti-partisan forces.

### STELLA ROSSA (RED STAR BRIGADE)

One of the few partisan organisations to be free from political ideology, the Stella Rossa resisted outside influences and existed thanks to support and arms drops by the American-run Office of Strategic Services – the forerunner of the CIA. The Stella Rossa first became active, with just 20 members, in November 1943.



### GIUSTIZIA E LIBERTÀ (JUSTICE AND LIBERTY) BRIGADES

Backed by the Action Party, GL brigades had the lofty ambition of forming a sort of unified army rather than merely engaging in guerrilla warfare. They made up around 21 per cent of all partisan forces in Italy and received preferential treatment from the Allies, who mistrusted the communists. One of their leaders, Ferruccio Parri (pictured), would go on to become a Prime Minister of Italy.



Parri was a militant anti-fascist and had been fighting Mussolini since the 1920s



Partisans photographed on the road to Belgrade



## MUSSOLINI'S DOWNFALL

that he was the 'victim of a serious physical and moral collapse'. Also crumpling was the German military position, on every front. The Allies broke through the Gothic Line in April, at the same time as they approached Berlin from the West and the Russians approached it from the East.

On 25 April, the partisan leadership met with Mussolini in Milan to work out terms for the surrender of his fascist militia groups. His attempt to work out a deal with them failed, only unconditional surrender was acceptable at this stage.

Leaving Milan, at 8pm, Mussolini embarked on a desperate bid to escape the country. He made it to Como that night and by 27 April had fallen in with a column of German troops, wearily heading home after their exhausting campaign in Italy.

A partisan roadblock stopped the column and after protracted discussions, the Germans were told they could continue their journey – but that all Italians had to be left behind. The Germans were unconcerned about the fate of their Italian passengers, but did agree to allow Mussolini, and Mussolini alone, to travel with them in

disguise. They gave him a greatcoat, helmet, sub-machine gun and the fateful sunglasses, in a futile attempt to obscure the most familiar face in Italy. Recognised quickly when the column was searched, Mussolini was arrested. He had fallen into the hands of the communists in the form of the 52nd Garibaldi Brigade.

### The final act

The communists were determined not to hand Mussolini, or the other members of his retinue – including his mistress, Claretta Petacci – over to the Allies. A miserable few hours followed,

*Below: The battered and mutilated corpse of Mussolini and his mistress, Claretta Petacci*



in which Mussolini's fate was argued over and he was disguised once more, this time by the partisans as they attempted to keep him alive until they had decided what to do with him. The decision, when it came, was brutally simple. Alongside his mistress, Mussolini was riddled with sub-machine gun bullets on 28 April 1945. Although many initially claimed to have been the man to kill Il Duce, confusion still reigns over who actually pulled the trigger.

The remaining members of his retinue were also executed and the bodies, including those of Mussolini and his mistress, were unceremoniously dumped in the Piazzale Loreto in Milan. On the morning of 29 April, the bodies were discovered and a mob quickly gathered to spit, kick and otherwise abuse the corpses. Mussolini, his mistress and others were strung up by their feet, their already stiffened bodies hanging grotesquely. The following day, Hitler committed suicide.

Even then, however, Italy's misery was not over. Mussolini was gone but the partisans had plenty of other targets. An orgy of violence erupted as thousands of fascists, and suspected fascists, were summarily executed.

Images: Alamy, Getty

*After executing the fascist leader, Italian partisans hung him, along with his retinue, in one of Milan's public squares*

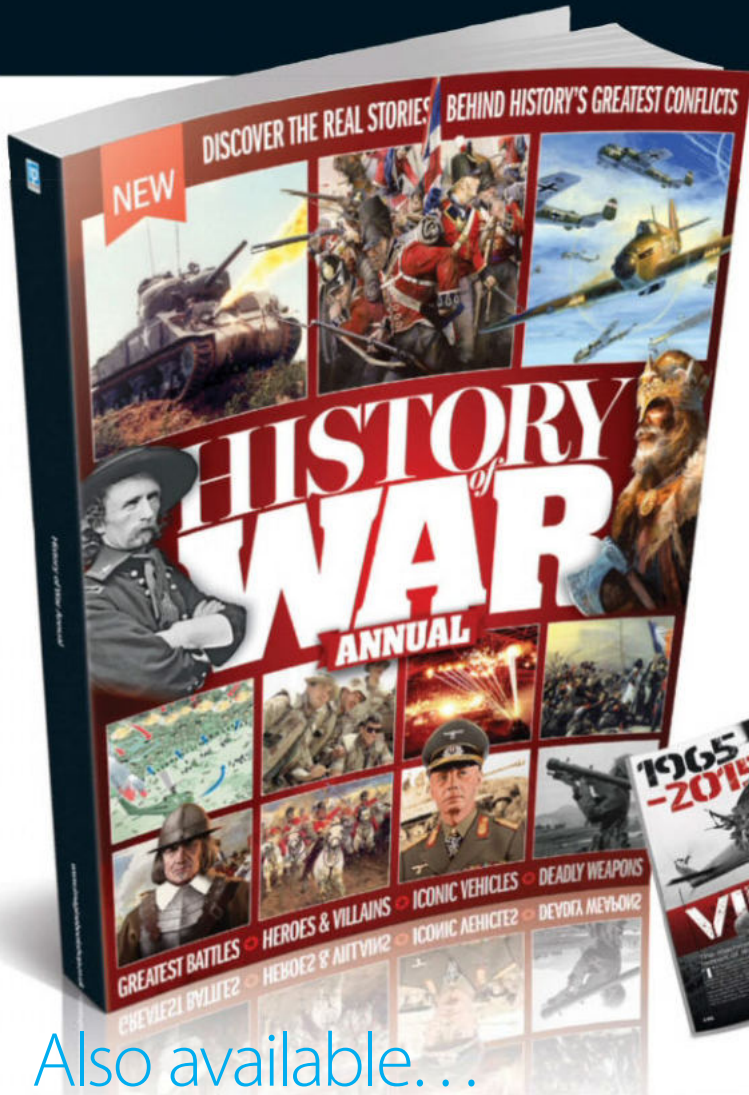




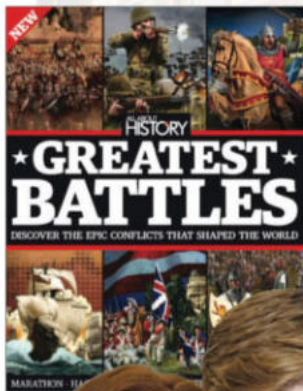
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Great Battles

# SEDAN

As a Prussian army marches rapidly to trap its French opponent, the French prepare to fight for their survival against one of the world's foremost military powers

WORDS WILLIAM WELSH

French snipers hold out  
against Bavarian troops  
in Alphonse de Neuville's  
*'The last cartridges'*



**“UNABLE TO BREAK THE PRUSSIAN LINE, THE DEJECTED SURVIVORS RETURNED TO THEIR LINES. THE CHASSEURS’ CHARGE WAS THE LAST COUNTERATTACK BY THE FRENCH ARMY AT SEDAN”**

## **NORTHEASTERN FRANCE 1 SEPTEMBER 1870**

**T**hick curtains of smoke drifted across the fields around the villages north of Sedan on the afternoon of 1 September 1870, as long lines of Prussian infantry in dark blue uniforms surged toward the old fortress on the Meuse River. Suddenly, there appeared before them in the distance two long lines of the French light cavalry. The renowned Chasseurs d’Afrique had formed in the protection of narrow ravines hidden from enemy sight. As they crested the ridge, the horsemen increased their pace to a full gallop, thundering towards Prussian skirmish lines. The skirmishers raised their weapons to ward off the blows, but many of the slashing sabres left gaping wounds in the vulnerable rank.

The main line of Prussian infantry held its fire until the cavalry were within 200 yards, and then fired in unison. “There came out the whiff and roll of a volley, which was kept up like the rattling of [a giant pinwheel],” wrote war correspondent William H Russell. Prussian six-pounders spewed canister from their barrels. The front line of horsemen tumbled to the ground in a tangled mass of bloody bodies. The second line of mounted men swerved to the left and right around the Prussian infantry.

A second regiment of cavalry thundered forward, and it was followed closely by a third regiment. Unable to break the Prussians, the dejected survivors returned to their lines. The chasseurs’ charge was the last counterattack by the French army at Sedan.

### **The rise of Prussian power**

During the 18th century, King Frederick I of Prussia set about melding a powerful professional army that his successor, Frederick ‘the Great’ II, would utilise during a series of wars. His aim was to expand the kingdom through conquest, such as in Silesia, and buoy its economy to raise the aspirations of its people. The growing power of Prussia threatened rival Austria, sparking repeated wars between the two central European powers. During the Napoleonic Wars, the Prussians had become acutely aware of the need for a general staff capable of developing military plans to achieve the kingdom’s war aims – this was duly established in 1809.

In the wake of Napoleon’s defeat, the rivalry between Austria and Prussia heated up again. When King William I took the crown in 1861, he appointed ministers who were just as determined as he was to replace Austria as the champion of the German states. Since its foundation in the early 19th century, Austria had dominated the German Confederation, which consisted of nearly three dozen lesser German states.

Through the machinations of German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Germany deliberately provoked Austria. By employing Prussian Chief of General Staff Helmuth von Moltke’s strategy of surrounding the enemy and defeating him in a *kesselschlacht*, literally





translated as cauldron battle, the Prussians vanquished the Austrians on 3 July 1866.

The Congress of Vienna reset the expanded French borders to the 1792 level, reverting to the pre-war consensus. However, during the first half of the 19th century, the French gradually slid back toward an autocratic government. As a result, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, a nephew of Napoleon I, proclaimed himself Emperor Napoleon III in 1852. The new emperor invested in new technologies in the following decade, such as the superb breech-loading Chassepot rifle that had a range of 1,500 meters, which was more than twice that of the Prussians' Dreyse Needle Gun, and the top-secret mitrailleuse, a volley gun with multiple barrels. However, he did not institute changes in leadership or tactics.

### The slip into war



Bismarck intended the wars with Prussia's European rivals as a way to unify Germany under the Hohenzollern dynasty by showing that they best represented the interests of the lesser German states. Although the defeat of Austria had furthered this aim, it did not complete it. Therefore, Bismarck set about antagonising France so that the German states would find it advantageous to support Prussia in a war against a resurgent France.

The political impetus for the Franco-Prussian War was Bismarck's attempt in spring 1870 to

put a cousin of King William's on the throne in Spain – this was something wholly unpalatable to Napoleon III. When he objected, Bismarck made it seem as if the French government had insulted the Prussians. The French were outraged, and they declared war on 19 July 1870. The Prussians, with military assistance from the North German Confederation, rapidly deployed 380,000 men in three armies on the border regions. The French fielded 224,000 men in eight corps under Napoleon III to oppose them.

After a series of costly frontier battles in early August, the French fell back towards the fortified town of Metz. Having failed to successfully direct the frontier campaign, the French emperor removed himself from direct command. He subsequently divided his eight corps into two armies, one of which was led by Marshal François Bazaine's Army of the Rhine and the other by Marshal Patrice MacMahon's Army of Châlons.

On 18 August, the Prussians launched poorly co-ordinated frontal attacks against the French at Gravelotte on the outskirts of the city. Although Bazaine's army for the most part repulsed the attacks, it withdrew inside the fortifications of Metz. General Karl von Steinmetz's Prussian First Army and Prince Frederick Charles Prussian Second Army promptly encircled Bazaine's army at Metz, trapping 180,000 men.

OPPOSING FORCES	
	
<b>FRENCH</b>	<b>PRUSSIANS</b>
<b>LEADER</b>	<b>LEADERS</b>
Marshal Patrice MacMahon	Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke, King William I
<b>TROOPS</b>	<b>TROOPS</b>
145,000	224,000
<b>GUNS</b>	<b>GUNS</b>
550	700

The day before the pitched battle at Gravelotte, Napoleon III, who was depressed over the setbacks his armies had previously encountered, left the Army of the Rhine and travelled under escort to Châlons where MacMahon was reinforcing his army with raw recruits from Paris.

Having received orders from ministers of the French government to march to the relief of Bazaine in Metz, MacMahon marched his army northeast on August 21 with the Prussian Third Army under Crown Prince Frederick William in hot pursuit. MacMahon hoped to get around the Prussian right flank near the Belgian border and then march southwest to Metz.





Moltke carved a new army out of the oversized Prussian Second Army at Metz, handing command of the newly established Army of the Meuse, the core of which was three infantry corps, to Crown Prince Albert of Saxony. Moltke then ordered the Army of the Meuse and the Third Army to march east in pursuit of MacMahon's army. On 30 August, French and Prussians clashed briefly at Beaumont-en-Argonne on the left bank of the Meuse, and MacMahon retreated northeast to Sedan to consolidate his forces.

Moltke was delighted when informed on 31 August of the French army's location. "We have them in a mousetrap!" he said. Moltke ordered Crown Prince Albert to march to Sedan on the right bank, and for Prince Frederick William's Third Army to advance on Metz via the left bank. The wily chief of staff planned to surround MacMahon's army and force them to fight a signature *kesselschlacht*. Once the enemy was surrounded, the Prussians would launch converging infantry attacks supported by massed artillery.

Sedan may have been a good place to regroup before resuming the march to Metz, but the Prussians refused to allow the French to do so. With two Prussian armies nearly on top of him, MacMahon positioned his four infantry corps for battle on a series of ridges north of Sedan, which was situated on the right bank of the Meuse River. Although Napoleon III was

*French cannon could not stand up to the new, more-advanced Prussian artillery*



present at Sedan, he left direction of the battle to MacMahon. The French commander failed to destroy the bridges above and below the city to retard the deployment of the Prussian Third Army on the right bank.

Should his army be forced to retreat towards the city, it would be caught on low ground under the mercy of Prussian guns on the surrounding hills. General Auguste-Alexandre Ducrot, commanding the French I Corps, suggested to MacMahon that the army would be better off

deploying further north on a high plateau, but the French commander ignored his advice.

MacMahon arranged his four infantry corps in a triangle and sent General Barthélemy Lebrun's XII Corps east of the city where it deployed behind the narrow Givonne River from the villages of Bazeilles to Dagny. He ordered Ducrot's I Corps to deploy on its left flank from Dagny to the village of Givonne. To guard against an attack from the west, MacMahon sent General Félix Douay's VII Corps, supported

*The Prussian victory at the Battle of Gravelotte allowed the French garrison at Metz to be surrounded, signalling the beginning of the end for Napoleon III*

**"BISMARCK INTENDED THE WARS WITH PRUSSIA'S EUROPEAN RIVALS AS A WAY TO UNIFY GERMANY UNDER THE HOHENZOLLERN DYNASTY BY SHOWING THAT THEY BEST REPRESENTED THE INTERESTS OF THE LESSER GERMAN STATES"**





by two cavalry divisions, to cover that approach. The remaining corps, General Emmanuel Wimpffen's V Corps, served as the reserve at the base of the triangle to support either side.

General Ludwig von der Tann sent the vanguard of his Royal Bavarian I Corps across the river above the town on 31 August, and General Julius von Bose did the same below with the lead elements of his XI Army Corps.

A thick fog clung to the village lanes and surrounding fields as von der Tann put his Bavarians in motion at 4am on 1 September. As the fighting heated up inside the village, elite French marines of General Jean de Vassogne's Third Division of the French XII Corps fired at enemy troops from concealed positions in houses. The stiff resistance encountered did not surprise von der Tann whose vanguard had clashed briefly with Lebrun's XII Corps on 31 August. "They will fight desperately for the emperor is there," he said.

The French also had a battery of mitrailleuses in the village, which slowed the Bavarians. With von der Tann's brigades bogged down, it fell upon the Army of the Meuse to resume the pace of attack. The Royal Saxon XII Corps arrived at 5.30am and went into action on the right flank of the hard-pressed Bavarians. The real damage came not from the Saxon infantry, but from 16 batteries that went into action to support them. At around 9am, Prince August von Württemberg's Guard Corps extended the Prussian line north as it went into action against Ducrot's I Corps.

Hard-fighting Ducrot ordered his men to counterattack, and French Zouaves in advanced positions on the east bank of the Givonne River armed with the powerful bolt-action Chassepot rifles temporarily drove back the Saxons of General Erwin von Holderberg's 24th Division. But the Prussians massed their guns in a way that raked Lebrun's XII Corps and shattered Ducrot's assaults. The rifled guns made by Krupp had a range of between 2-3,000 yards.

The French, with their superior infantry weapons, held the advantage on defence, and therefore it was incumbent upon the Prussians to pulverise enemy positions with their field guns before sending their infantry forward. Throughout the day, the Prussian gunners

# ANTIQUATED FORTRESS

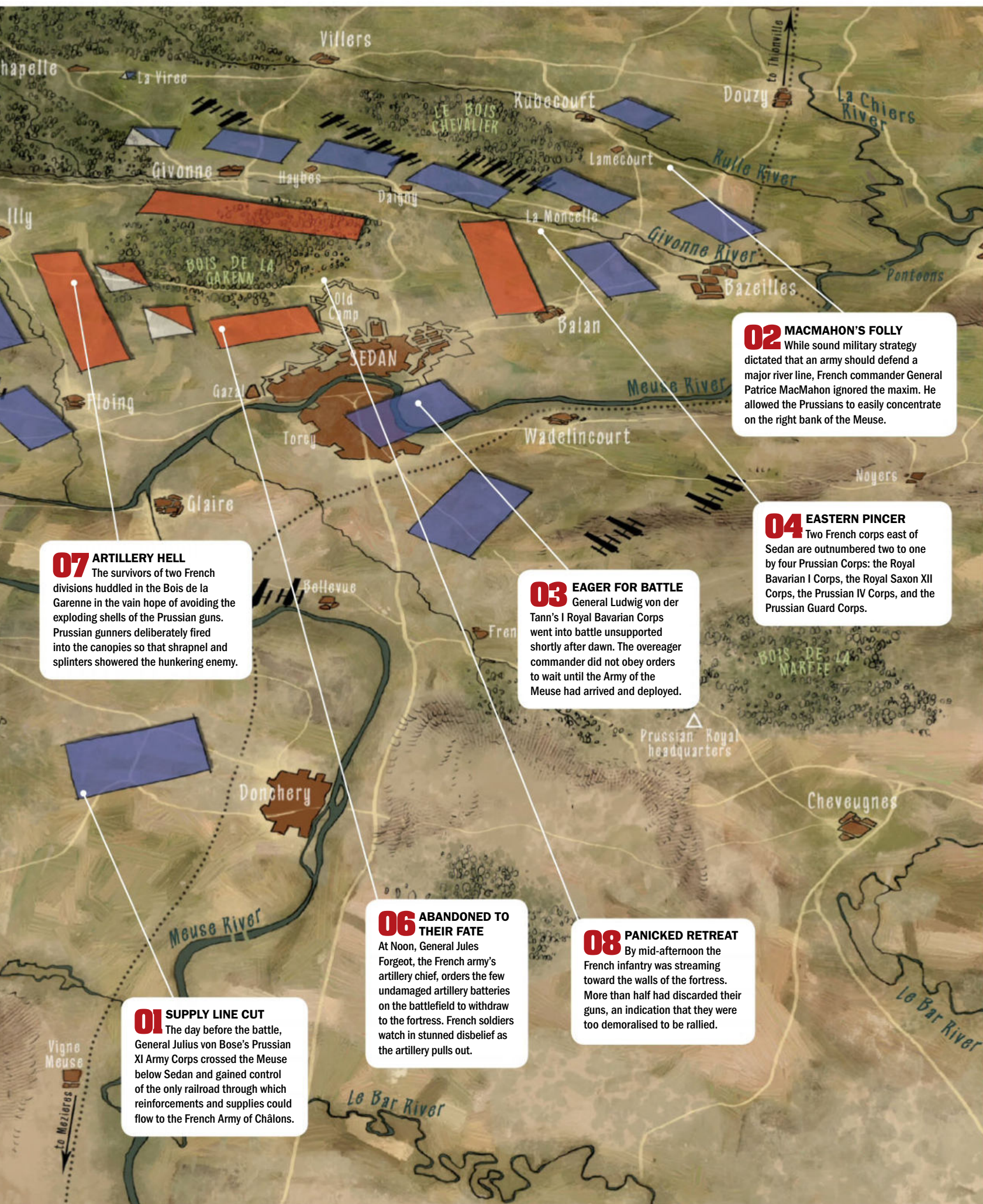
THE FRONTIER FORTRESS OF SEDAN WAS STATE-OF-THE-ART IN THE 17TH CENTURY, BUT BY THE TIME OF THE BATTLE IT WAS SORELY OUTDATED. SITUATED ON A BEND IN THE MEUSE RIVER, IT OFFERED NO REAL PROTECTION FROM PRUSSIAN LONG-RANGE GUNS

**05 WESTERN PINCER**  
Ordered by von Moltke to cut off French retreat to the northwest, Crown Prince Frederick establishes a formidable battle line west of the fortress, which consists of the V Army Corps on the left and XI Army Corps on the right.



The mitrailleuse volley guns were never built in sufficient numbers to significantly tip the balance in battles



**07 ARTILLERY HELL**

The survivors of two French divisions huddled in the Bois de la Garenne in the vain hope of avoiding the exploding shells of the Prussian guns. Prussian gunners deliberately fired into the canopies so that shrapnel and splinters showered the hunkering enemy.

**02 MACMAHON'S FOLLY**

While sound military strategy dictated that an army should defend a major river line, French commander General Patrice MacMahon ignored the maxim. He allowed the Prussians to easily concentrate on the right bank of the Meuse.

**04 EASTERN PINCER**

Two French corps east of Sedan are outnumbered two to one by four Prussian Corps: the Royal Bavarian I Corps, the Royal Saxon XII Corps, the Prussian IV Corps, and the Prussian Guard Corps.

**03 EAGER FOR BATTLE**

General Ludwig von der Tann's I Royal Bavarian Corps went into battle unsupported shortly after dawn. The overeager commander did not obey orders to wait until the Army of the Meuse had arrived and deployed.

**06 ABANDONED TO THEIR FATE**

At Noon, General Jules Forget, the French army's artillery chief, orders the few undamaged artillery batteries on the battlefield to withdraw to the fortress. French soldiers watch in stunned disbelief as the artillery pulls out.

**08 PANICKED RETREAT**

By mid-afternoon the French infantry was streaming toward the walls of the fortress. More than half had discarded their guns, an indication that they were too demoralised to be rallied.

**01 SUPPLY LINE CUT**

The day before the battle, General Julius von Bose's Prussian XI Army Corps crossed the Meuse below Sedan and gained control of the only railroad through which reinforcements and supplies could flow to the French Army of Châlons.



focused first on disabling French batteries – once that was done, they turned their guns on the unsupported French infantry.

Lebrun's XII Corps suffered converging fire from Prussian guns to the east, as well as dozens of Prussians guns on the opposite side of the Meuse. Lebrun said his corps experienced, "an avalanche of iron."

Reinforced by the Saxons who attacked with fixed bayonets, and assisted by massed artillery on both banks, the Bavarians pushed through Bazeilles and advanced on the next village, Balan.

A key event occurred that morning that would shape the course of the battle when MacMahon was severely injured in the leg by shrapnel while riding at 5am towards the sound of battle east of the city. Ducrot, who was second-in-command, believed it was best for the French to retreat west before they were surrounded. He therefore issued orders for the French I and XII corps to begin withdrawing west. A short time later, Wimpffen handed Ducrot a directive signed by the French minister of war. The directive stated that if MacMahon was wounded, Wimpffen, not Ducrot, was to replace him as army commander. Ducrot had no choice but relinquish command.

Unaware that an entire Prussian army was advancing up the right bank of the Meuse, Wimpffen believed it might be possible for the French to fight their way through the Prussian line east of Sedan and resume their march to relieve the French army trapped in Metz. For

## "THE LONG LINES OF PRUSSIAN INFANTRY NORTHWEST OF THE CITY SPELLED DOOM FOR THE FRENCH ARMY OF CHÂLONS"

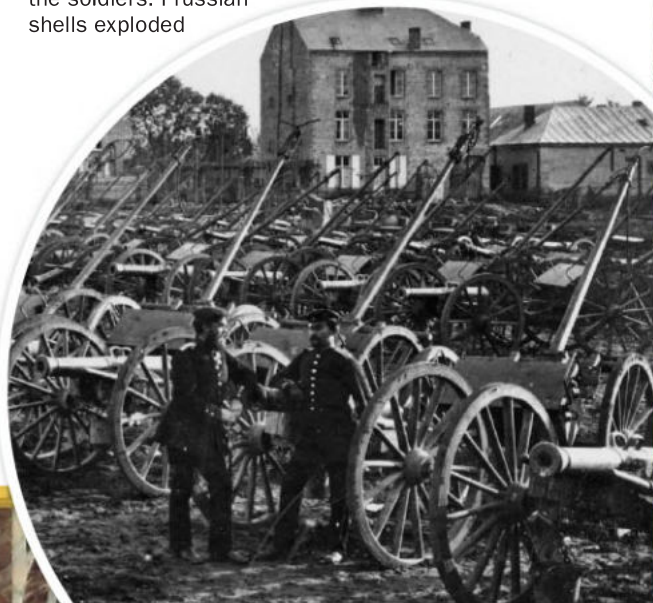
that reason, Wimpffen countermanded Ducrot's orders for a general withdrawal from the Givonne line. He ordered Lebrun to drive the Bavarians from Balan and directed additional French guns to support the counterattack.

As the Bavarians and Saxons battled the French east of the citadel, at 7.30am Crown Prince Frederick William sent two of his infantry corps to assail the French from the northwest. Von Bose's XI Corps led the way, followed by General Hugo von Kirchbach's V Corps. In order to reach their attack positions, the two corps had to march around a long bend in the Meuse.

Once his regiments reached their attack positions, Von Bose hurled them against the left flank of Douay's VII Corps, which was waiting for them at Floing. While von Bose's attack was under way, Kirchbach led his men onto the plateau that Ducrot had hoped to use to facilitate a French withdrawal to the west. When their regiments became intermingled, Kirchbach assumed overall control of both corps. The French were firing from shallow trenches on some of the ridges between the villages of Floing and Illy and it was hard to pry them out. The Third Army deployed 144 guns from 24 batteries firing explosive shells to support the two corps. French batteries supporting the VII Corps near the village of Floing were

caught in a deadly crossfire from the Prussian guns in front of them, as well as Prussian guns enfilading them from across the Meuse.

The long lines of Prussian infantry, northwest of city, spelled doom for the French Army of Châlons. The two Prussian corps steadily forced back the French VII Corps. The French only had two days' worth of rations in Sedan for their army. Unless the French could punch through that line, they were likely to be bottled up in Sedan with no rations to feed the soldiers. Prussian shells exploded



Two Prussian soldiers survey rank upon rank of captured French artillery following the battle



After victory in the Franco-Prussian war, Prussian king William I was proclaimed as the German Emperor at the Palace of Versailles





Bavarian soldiers are caught in intense street-to-street fighting to clear the French from the Village of Bazailles

around all of the French infantry trying to hold back the blue tide.

By early afternoon, Prussian artillery dominated the battlefield, having smashed any French batteries that dared to challenge them. To the east, Ducrot's I Corps had been pried from the Givonne Line and its rifle companies and platoons fell back to the ridges and ravines in the Bois de la Garenne. Likewise, some of the riflemen from Douay's VII Corps sought protection from the omnipresent Prussian guns in the large tract of woods.

Ducrot, who was assisting Wimpffen in directing the army, called on the reserve cavalry, which was stationed in the vale behind the VII Corps. This was an attempt to punch a hole in the XI Corps, by which the French might be able to fight their way out to the west. The task fell to the General Jean Margueritte's chasseurs. They thundered across the rolling terrain between 1.30pm and 2pm, determined to attempt the impossible. Large swaths of men and horses were slain in the torrent of Prussian rifle and canister

fire. "Ah, those brave men!" said the German king as he watched from the opposite bank. As mid-afternoon approached, it was clear the Prussian field officers had executed a textbook example of Moltke's *kesselschlacht*. The Prussian artillery arm, which had fired 20,000 shells during the battle, had contributed substantially to that victory.

Prince August of Württemberg mercilessly ordered ten batteries from the Guard Corps to systematically shell every sector of the Bois de la Garenne. Under the rain of iron, white flags appeared throughout the forest. At 2.30pm, the Guard regiments began mopping up in the forest.

By late afternoon those French soldiers who had not been slain were streaming south toward the citadel. When the fugitives from the French front lines reached the citadel, they had a fresh shock. Those inside had locked the gates. Driven to frenzy by the continued enemy shelling, many of the fugitives scaled the walls.

Sick of the killing, Napoleon III sent a dispatch through the lines to the German King requesting an immediate armistice. Throughout the day the

French emperor, who was suffering from a severe bladder ailment, had ridden from one French unit to another hoping that he would be killed on the battlefield. Fate determined otherwise.

On the morning following the French defeat, Napoleon III met with Bismarck near the Prussian royal headquarters to complete the terms of the surrender. The French emperor requested that he be allowed to travel to captivity in Germany over a different route than his soldiers. Bismarck approved the request.

The Prussians had captured 21,000 prisoners during the battle, and they took 83,000 more into captivity on 2 September. The French had suffered 38,000 casualties compared to 9,000 Prussian casualties. Several thousand French soldiers managed to escape to Belgium. Trapped in Metz, the French Army of the Rhine surrendered in October. The Second Empire fell, and was replaced by the Third Republic.

On 18 January 1871, the Germans proclaimed King William as emperor of a united Germany in a ceremony at the Palace of Versailles. To add even more insult, the Germans took possession of Alsace-Lorraine as a spoil of war. The French Army would not get a chance at revenge until the next century. This would prove to be a far longer and bloodier conflict than any alive at the time could have guessed.

**"PRINCE AUGUST OF WÜRTTEMBERG MERCILESSLY ORDERED TEN BATTERIES FROM THE GUARD CORPS TO SYSTEMATICALLY SHELL EVERY SECTOR OF THE BOIS DE LA GARENNE"**





A pro-English Burgundian eyewitness, Jean de Waurin, wrote that during the Battle of Verneuil Bedford wore a blue gown and a surcoat depicting the dual kingdom. The white cross represented France while the red cross symbolised England. Additionally, as a Knight of Garter Bedford would have worn the Order's badge to show his pre-eminence among his troops as well as the Garter itself on his left calf. The duke was recorded as using a two-handed axe during the battle and 'killed many a man' with it.

Illustration: Jean-Michel Givard - The Art Agency



# ENGLAND'S FORGOTTEN WARRIOR

# JOHN

## DUKE OF BEDFORD

WORDS TOM GARNER

Henry V's younger brother continued the English conquest of France with stunning success, winning a huge battle in 1424. However, his greatest threat would come from a teenage peasant girl: Joan of Arc

**I**n the early 15th century, an outnumbered English army lined up against a superior enemy force in northern France. Some 9,600 men stood ready to fight and die for King Henry of England, during the crown's ongoing struggle for control of France. With the help of longbows, the English won a resounding victory, against all the odds.

However, at this point comparisons with the Battle of Agincourt end. The king in question was not Henry V, but his two-year-old son Henry VI and the year was not 1415, but 1424. The battlefield itself was near a town called Verneuil, Normandy, and the English commander was Henry V's younger brother John, Duke of Bedford. His tremendous victory at Verneuil was soon dubbed by contemporaries as 'The Second Agincourt'. Bedford is an overlooked figure today, but he was a talented general and politician who successfully continued the English conquest of France during the latter part of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) after the premature death of his older brother in 1422.

That he should be forgotten today is something of a mystery as his military victories were some of the most important of the entire

conflict, and his life was heavily influenced by two of the most famous people of the period: Henry V and his arch-enemy Joan of Arc.

### A sea fight off Harfleur

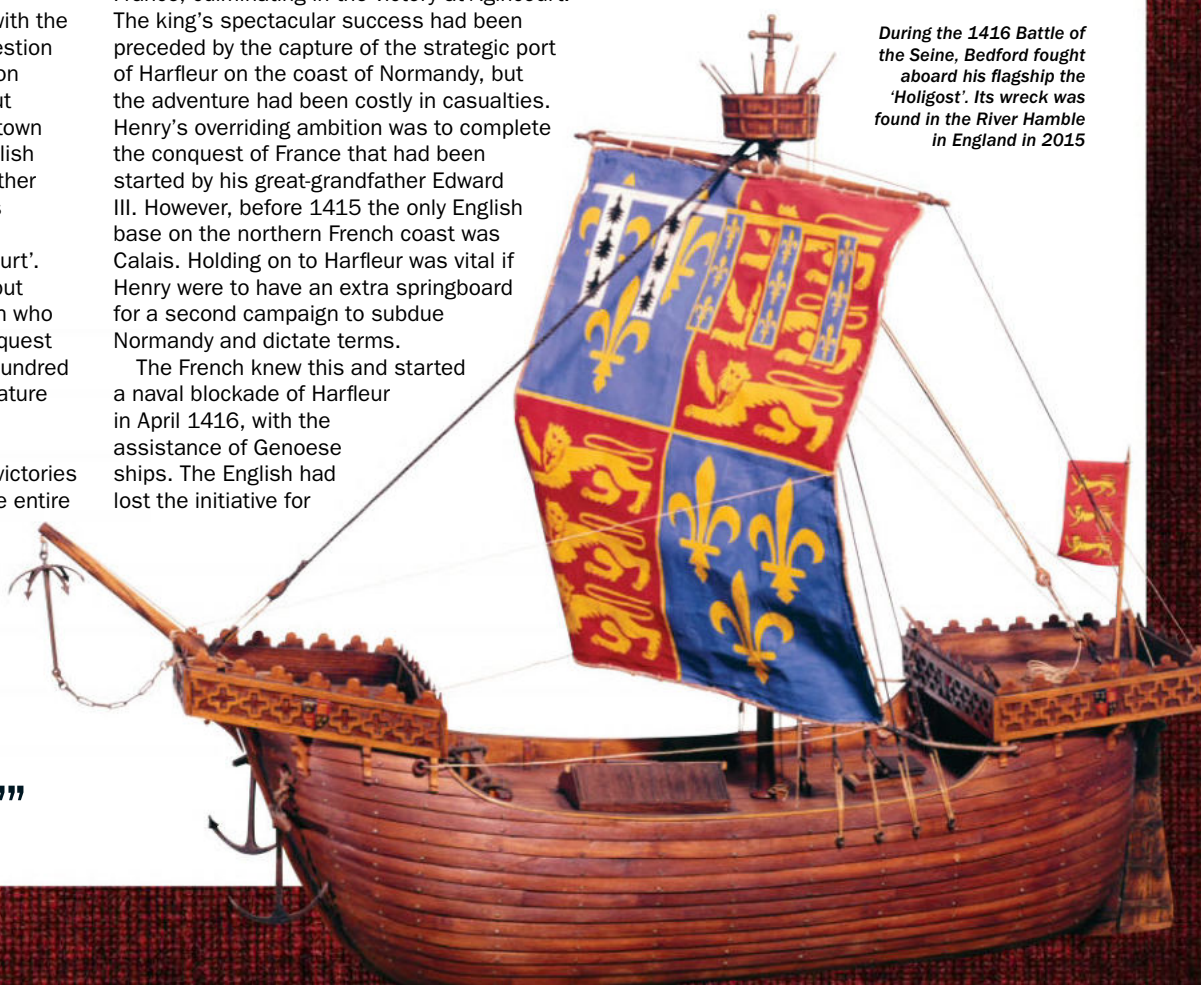
As the king's brother, Bedford had been assigned the task of administering England in 1415, while Henry V pursued his campaign in France, culminating in the victory at Agincourt. The king's spectacular success had been preceded by the capture of the strategic port of Harfleur on the coast of Normandy, but the adventure had been costly in casualties. Henry's overriding ambition was to complete the conquest of France that had been started by his great-grandfather Edward III. However, before 1415 the only English base on the northern French coast was Calais. Holding on to Harfleur was vital if Henry were to have an extra springboard for a second campaign to subdue Normandy and dictate terms.

The French knew this and started a naval blockade of Harfleur in April 1416, with the assistance of Genoese ships. The English had lost the initiative for

the first time since Agincourt and a relief fleet was not able to sail until August. Henry couldn't take command, as he was negotiating an alliance with the visiting Holy Roman emperor, Sigismund I, and instead sent Bedford to relieve Harfleur. Bedford was not an obvious choice for command, as he had little military experience, and he would be facing perhaps 150 French

*During the 1416 Battle of the Seine, Bedford fought aboard his flagship the 'Hologicost'. Its wreck was found in the River Hamble in England in 2015*

**"HIS TREMENDOUS VICTORY AT VERNEUIL WAS SOON DUBBED BY CONTEMPORARIES AS 'THE SECOND AGINCOURT'"**





and Genoese carracks. Genoese ships in particular had a fearsome reputation, but despite this, Bedford sailed to meet them with a fleet of about one hundred ships and on 15 August engaged in a fierce fight at the mouth of the River Seine.

Medieval naval battles were capable of replicating land warfare. The opposing ships would use grappling hooks to join together and form a vast, floating, wooden battlefield. The English had used their superiority with longbows to successfully fight at sea before and repeated this tactic in 1416.

An anonymous English chronicler wrote: "Following an exchange of missiles... the fury of the combatants had reached boiling point. At last, after a long, drawn-out and most bitter

fight of five or six hours, victory was yielded to the English."

The Battle of the Seine was hard-fought because neither side could afford defeat. The French, whose pride had been dented at Agincourt, were determined not to lose control of the English Channel and the English did not want to forfeit their foothold in Normandy. The English victory was resounding and strategically important. Although Agincourt had been a great tactical victory, it did not lead to immediate success in the war and Bedford's victory cannot be overlooked. If Harfleur had been recaptured, Henry would have had to restart his conquests from scratch, altering the course of history.

The relief of Harfleur enabled Henry to conquer Normandy in 1417, which in turn

led to the Treaty of Troyes in 1420. This acknowledged Henry as the heir to the French throne and laid the foundations for a dual monarchy, but none of this would have been possible without Bedford's victory.

His conduct during the fight was praised by contemporaries who said, "No one had borne himself more bravely in that battle." Emperor Sigismund was moved to say to Henry, "Happy are those subjects that have such a king, but more is the king that has such subjects."

### An unexpected regency

In 1422 Charles VI of France died and Henry V should have succeeded to the throne as king of both England and France. However, in one of history's most fateful ironies, the warrior king died of dysentery a few months before Charles, aged 36, leaving his son Henry VI to inherit the dual kingdom.

Unfortunately the new king was only nine-months old and the English administration

## "THIS ACKNOWLEDGED HENRY AS THE HEIR TO THE FRENCH THRONE AND LAID THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A DUAL MONARCHY"

*Joan of Arc's military successes enabled the coronation of Charles VII in Reims Cathedral in direct defiance of Bedford's English regime*



**Above:** After the battle at Verneuil the road lay open to take Bourges, with this the whole of France could fall under English rule



**Above:** John, Duke of Bedford pictured kneeling in front of Saint George. As Regent of France Bedford continued his brother Henry V's conquests with great success



# THE BATTLE OF VERNEUIL

IN AUGUST 1424, NORTHERN FRANCE WAS SECURED FOR THE ENGLISH IN A CLASH THAT CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'SECOND AGINCOURT'

Bedford had won a great naval battle in 1416 but he was still untested on a traditional field of battle. By 1424, the war in France had reached a critical level.

With Henry V dead and a toddler on two thrones it was up to Bedford to advance the English cause

in France but he was up against formidable and unyielding opponents. French supporters of the Dauphin always outnumbered English troops and they were assisted by a Scottish army that was intent on fighting the Regent to the death. Bedford was about to face his greatest challenge.



Above: The Battle of Verneuil in 1424 was one of the most decisive clashes of the Hundred Years' War and was known as 'The Second Agincourt'

**"BEDFORD HAD WON A GREAT NAVAL BATTLE IN 1416 BUT HE WAS UNTESTED ON A TRADITIONAL FIELD OF BATTLE"**

## 01 BEDFORD APPROACHES

At the crack of dawn on 17 August, Bedford draws up his army of 9,600 men on the road from Damville in the northeast of Normandy where it emerges from a forest onto a plain in front of the town of Verneuil.

## 02 THE ENGLISH PREPARE

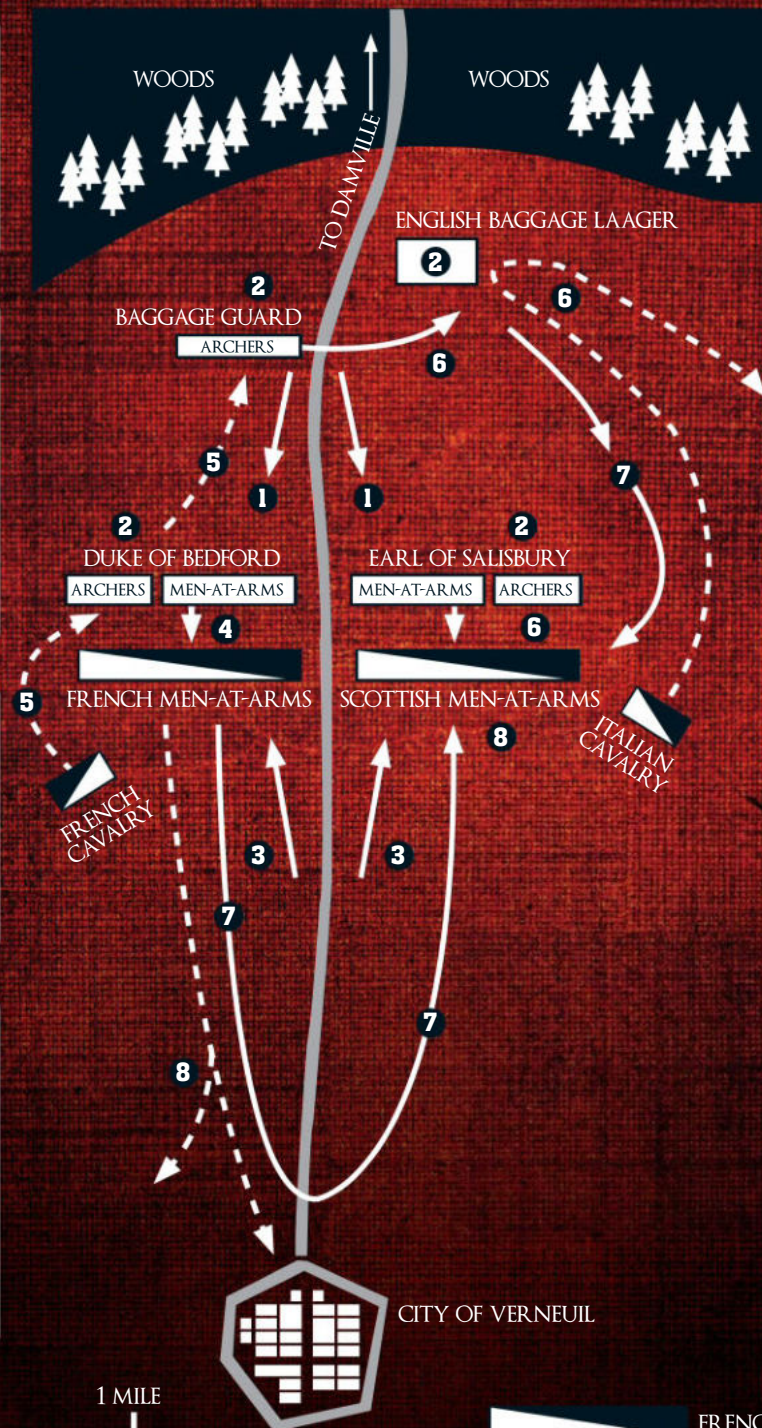
Bedford places his dismounted men-at-arms in the centre of the battle, while he positions his archers on the wings. Bedford commands the right division, while the Earl of Salisbury commands the left. There are two reserves, 2,000 mounted archers and a separate square, laagered baggage train where horses are tethered amongst the wagons.

## 03 THE FRENCH AND SCOTS PREPARE

The Franco-Scottish army of 14-16,000 men form in two divisions of men-at-arms linked by archers while cavalry protects their wings. Viscount d'Aumale commands the left while the Earls of Buchan and Douglas command 6,000 Scots on the right.

## 04 THREATS, DECEIT AND AN ADVANCE

The Scottish tell the English soldiers that they intend to give no quarter, but neither side makes to attack for hours in the sweltering sun. At approximately 4pm Bedford orders an advance. The English troops shout, "St George! Bedford!" and slowly march forward with the fleet of archers hammering defensive stakes into the dusty ground.



## 05 CAVALRY CHARGE AND VICIOUS COMBAT

French cavalymen charge through archers on Bedford's right flank, riding on before being stopped by the bowmen in reserve. Many of the Englishmen flee, but the rest of Bedford's division smash into d'Aumale's division in furious hand-to-hand combat. Bedford is positioned in the thick of the fighting.

## 06 ITALIANS LOOT THE ENGLISH LAAGER

On the English left Salisbury is engaged in fierce fighting with the Scots. Meanwhile, 600 Italian cavalry sweep past him to plunder the laager where they start to loot the baggage. The English reserve repels the French cavalymen before rushing to beat off the Italians in the laager.

## 07 ENGLISH REASSEMBLE AND CHARGE

The energised English reserve now charges to help Salisbury, careering into the Scottish flank with a loud yell. Meanwhile Bedford, who has managed to beat off the French left, reassembles his own division to charge at the Scottish rear, overwhelming them in the process.

## 08 A VENGEFUL SLAUGHTER

The Scots are killed almost to a man, including the Earls of Buchan, Douglas and Mar. The French flee the field with the dead including the viscounts of Aumale and Narbonne. Marshal Lafayette and Jean II, Duke of Alençon are among the captured and the English are triumphant.

0 1/2 1 MILE

FRENCH ENGLISH



divided his lands into two governments. Henry V's youngest brother, Humphrey, ran England, while Bedford was named as Regent of France. This was by far the hardest assignment, as Bedford had to continue his brother's conquests in the face of stiff opposition by those who regarded Charles VI's son, the Dauphin, as the true king of France.

One Victorian historian said Bedford was, "at once prime minister and commander-in-chief, he was virtually king of France." Additionally, Bedford had to maintain a tenuous alliance with the Duke of Burgundy. Burgundian support was essential to Bedford as the English did not have a numerical superiority in France, but the alliance was shaky as Burgundy was a semi-dependent duchy and its duke was a slippery character who changed sides depending on the political climate. This meant that the English took on the bulk of the military offensive against 'Dauphinist' French armies.

Under Bedford's leadership the English armies had continued success in France. An Anglo-Burgundian army defeated a numerically superior Franco-Scottish army at Cravant in July

1423 and Bedford then intended to build up his army for a decisive stroke against the Dauphin.

His plan revolved around strengthening Normandy's frontiers by occupying Picardy and driving French troops from key towns on the River Somme. To achieve this, Bedford laid siege to Ivry, a town 30 miles west of Paris, but the French immediately captured the Norman border town of Verneuil in August 1424. Ivry surrendered on 14 August and Bedford rushed his army to recapture Verneuil. The battle that would take place outside its walls would secure Bedford's reputation.

### The 'Second Agincourt'

On 17 August, Bedford's army of approximately 9,600 men lined up across the north road out of . He arranged his army in the 'Agincourt' formation with his men-at-arms in the centre and the famous archers on the flanks. There was also a reserve of 2,000 archers who formed a laager of wagons and horses to defend the baggage train.

Facing the English was a 'French' army of about 14-16,000 men but 6,000 of

these troops were Scottish under the command of the Earls of Douglas and Buchan. The Scots were vigorous allies of the French and had been a considerable thorn in the side of the English for decades, and the Dauphin had even appointed Buchan as Constable of France.

Viscount d'Aumale was commanding this coalition army, but the Scots had a great degree of influence. For Bedford, the battle would be personal, as it was a Scottish force that had killed his elder brother, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, at the Battle of Baugé in 1421.

A Burgundian eyewitness, Jean de Waurin, who fought for the English, described the Anglo-Scottish enmity during the battle: "The English archers, and the Scots who were with the French, began to shoot each other so cruelly that it was horrible to look at them. They brought death with full force to those they attacked. After the shooting the parties attacked each other furiously, hand to hand."

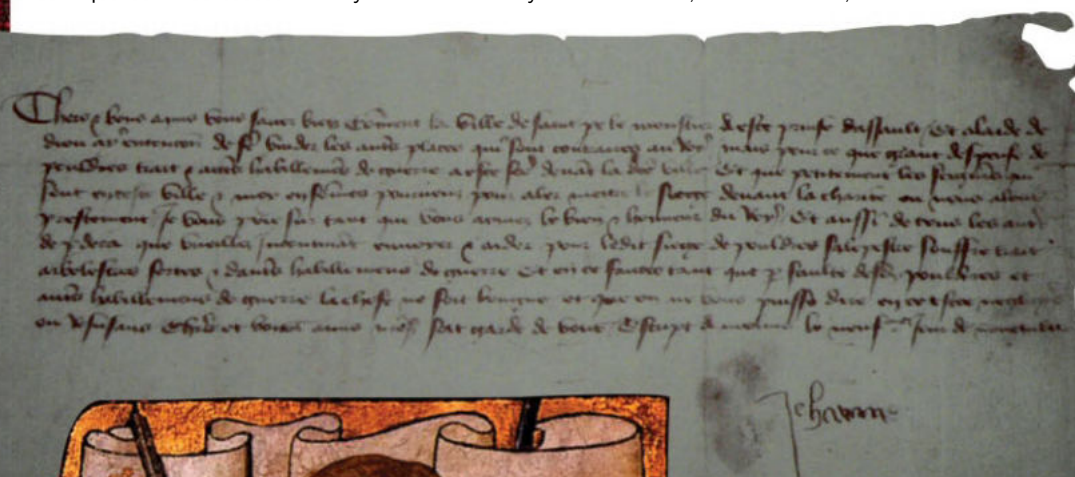
Waurin, who had fought at Agincourt, stated that Verneuil was a more ferocious battle:

"Without doubt, I have never seen a finer company where there were so many nobles showing greater appearance of wanting to fight. I saw the assembly of Agincourt, but the assembly at Verneuil was the most formidable and the best fought."

He went on to state: "This battle lasted about three-quarters of an hour, very terrible and bloody, and it was not in the memory of man to have two such mighty parties fighting for such a space of time without being able to tell to whom the loss or victory would turn..."

Eventually, however, victory turned decisively for the English. As at Agincourt, the archers played a part in the success

*Left: Joan dictated many letters to the English demanding their withdrawal from France. This particular letter is addressed to the people of the city of Riom (in the Auvergne region) in 1429*



## JOAN OF ARC ENGLAND'S NEMESIS

THE SCOURGE OF THE ENGLISH IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS WOMEN IN HISTORY, WHOSE SHORT BUT EXTRAORDINARY LIFE HAS BECOME LEGENDARY

Joan of Arc is a French national icon and one of the most curiously fascinating figures to emerge from the Middle Ages. She was a teenage peasant girl from Domrémy in Lorraine who claimed to hear divine voices telling her to expel the English from France and crown the Dauphin as Charles VII.

Remarkably, her story was believed (or used) by Charles and he allowed her to accompany a relief convoy to the Siege of Orléans carrying a holy banner and wearing a suit of armour. Joan soon energised the town and garrison into taking the fight to the English and the siege was lifted on 8 May 1429 – just over a week after her arrival. The spell of English invincibility had been broken and shortly afterwards they were driven from the Loire region in a series of sieges and battles that Joan either took part in or helped to inspire.

Following these victories Joan and her allies moved fast to crown the Dauphin as Charles VII at Reims Cathedral in July 1429, but a subsequent attack on Paris failed in September. In the spring of 1430, Burgundians captured her while she was attacking Compiègne and she was subsequently sold to the English who imprisoned her at Rouen.

At her subsequent trial she was accused of witchcraft, heresy and cross-dressing but she amazed her accusers with her spontaneous eloquence and intelligent defiance. She was burned at the stake for relapsed heresy aged only 19 in May 1431. A posthumous trial in 1456 declared her innocent and she has since become a patron saint of France.

*Left: Joan was famous for wearing a suit of armour and carrying a distinctive white banner*



# TO THE VICTOR, THE SPOILS

LARGELY THANKS TO HIS FATHER HENRY V AND HIS UNCLE BEDFORD, HENRY VI REMAINS THE ONLY KING OF ENGLAND TO BE CROWNED AS KING OF FRANCE

It is commonly assumed that Joan of Arc's military successes caused the collapse of English rule in France. While this was true in the long term, it was not apparent in the early 1430s. In fact Henry VI of England was crowned in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris as King of France on 26 December 1431, months after Joan had been executed. He was only ten years old, but he had already been crowned as King of England on 6 November 1429 in Westminster Abbey. The ceremony was rich in symbolism for his dual kingdoms.

He was announced as, "Born by descent and title of right justly to reign in England and in France." The traditional site for crowning French kings was at Reims Cathedral but it was under hostile French occupation so Paris was the second option.

Henry arrived in Paris on a white horse accompanied by his retinue and nobles, with Bedford prominent among them. He rode under a canopy, the symbol of rank and honour, and was greeted by the prominent Parisian bishops and burghers who all wore lavish costumes. Paris was decked out with colourful symbolic shields and statues to mark Henry's arrival.

During the coronation ceremony the king was crowned by the Bishop of Winchester and the singing was apparently of a good standard. The same could not be said of the celebratory banquet, as the food organised by the English had been prepared three days before and was cold. In time-honoured tradition the French disapproved, with one Parisian writing, "This seemed very odd to the French."

Henry VI was crowned in Notre Dame Cathedral as king of France in December 1431. This was arguably the pinnacle of Bedford's achievements



but the fighting was much more hand-to-hand and the casualties were high. The English lost 1,600 men while the Franco-Scottish army had casualties of at least 7,000. The vast majority of these were the Scots who were virtually annihilated. Two days after the battle, Bedford confirmed: "There were very few Scots who were not slain."

Contemporaries are unanimous about Bedford's leadership capabilities, with Waurin saying, "The Duke of Bedford did that day wonderful deeds of arms, and killed many a man with an axe that he held in two hands. He reached no one whom he did not fell, he was great in body and large in limbs, wise and brave in arms." The chronicler John Hardyng agreed, "The regent was there that day a lion, and fought in arms like any champion."

Unlike Agincourt, Verneuil's strategic importance was profound. The battle destroyed the Scottish army and French morale, allowing the English to push further south towards the Loire River and securing Normandy from the French for nearly 30 years.

For five years after Verneuil, the English were virtually unopposed by the French until they laid siege to the town of Orléans between 1428-29 when Bedford would first hear from his most famous foe: Joan of Arc.

## The Regent and the Maid

Joan was an illiterate teenage peasant girl from Lorraine who claimed to hear voices from God telling her to liberate France from the English and helped to raise the Siege of Orléans. Her now famous 'Letter to the English' before her arrival was directly addressed to Bedford: "King of England, and you, Duke of Bedford, who call yourself Regent of France... Hand over to the Maiden (Joan) who is sent here by God, the keys to all the towns you have taken and violated in France. Duke of Bedford, the Maiden asks and requests that you will not cause your own downfall."

After the siege, French forces heavily defeated English armies and the Dauphin was

crowned as Charles VII at Reims Cathedral in July 1429. The English were on the back foot for the first time in years. However, Bedford was not present at either the siege or the subsequent defeats, as he was running the English administration in Paris. He was incensed by Joan's presence and described her as, "a disorderly and deformed travesty of a woman who dresses like a man and whose life is dissolute."

After the coronation, Charles and Joan marched on Paris and Bedford went with his army to confront the French at Montépilloy in August. The two armies faced each other for two days but neither attacked, which was highly unusual for both Bedford and Joan.

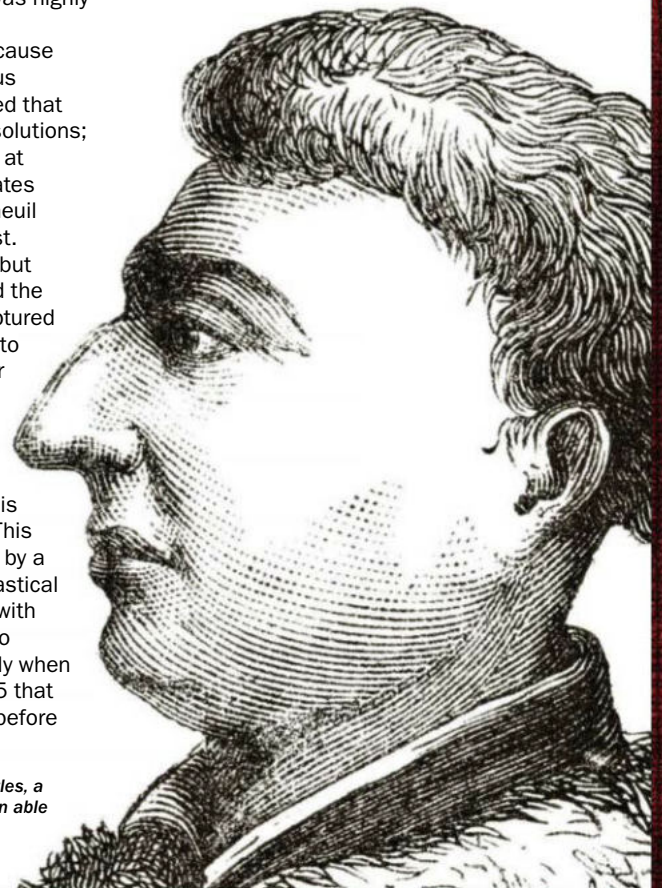
Bedford refrained from attacking because his men were terrified of Joan's previous successes. On Joan's part it is recorded that she was, "perpetually changing her resolutions; sometimes she was eager for combat, at other times not." This indecision indicates that Joan did not want a repeat of Verneuil and both armies withdrew on 16 August. Joan immediately went to attack Paris but Bedford had reinforced its defence and the siege immediately failed. Joan was captured by the Burgundians in May 1430, sold to the English and burned at the stake for relapsed heresy in May 1431.

Bedford was the only English general that Joan never defeated, either at a siege or on the battlefield, and if he is remembered at all today it is as 'the man who burned Joan of Arc'. This is erroneous, as Joan was condemned by a largely French, pro-Burgundian ecclesiastical court, but Bedford would have agreed with their decision. The English advance into France may have stalled, but it was only when Bedford died of natural causes in 1435 that the French started to reclaim territory before finally expelling the English in 1453.

**Right:** Bedford was the victor of two major battles, a loyal uncle to his young nephew Henry VI and an able administrator and patron of the arts

Bedford was recognised as a great man during his lifetime. In 1433 the English Parliament wrote to Henry VI saying his uncle had, "achieved many great things, especially the battle of Verneuil, which was the greatest deed done by Englishmen in our days, save the battle of Agincourt."

Even the French admired him. When Louis XI, who reigned between 1461-83, was asked to demolish Bedford's tomb in Rouen Cathedral he replied: "In his lifetime neither my father nor yours, for all their might, could make him budge one foot. Let his body rest. I account it an honour to have him remain in my domains".



Images: Alamy, Getty



# T.E. LAWRENCE DESERT

In the burning sands of Arabia, a young British officer fought a pioneering guerrilla war in the name of Arab independence, but against a backdrop of imperial treachery

*Left: Lawrence often adopted Arabic dress which made travelling through the desert much more comfortable*

World War I is a conflict largely seen through a muddy prism of barbed wire, trenches and the sodden killing fields of No Man's Land. The Western Front has had such a pervading influence on modern perceptions of the war that it is often forgotten it was fought in many different parts of the globe, including the Eastern Front, Africa and even the Pacific Ocean. In fact, one of the most famous figures to emerge from the war fought in the Middle East, and has since become a legend of 20th century history: TE Lawrence.





# REBEL

WORDS TOM GARNER

Lawrence's story is one of the most unlikely to have emerged from the war. An Oxford-educated archaeologist, his expert knowledge of Arabian culture led him to become a liaison officer between the British and Arabs, who in 1916 rebelled against the rule of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

He played a large part in unifying the Arab tribes who then pushed the Turks out of the Arabian Peninsula, Palestine, Syria and Iraq. However, Lawrence's dream of a unified Arab state were dashed by the backroom ambitions of Britain and France, who subsequently carved the Middle East into imperial 'mandates'.

The Allied betrayal of the Arabs, and Lawrence's own tortured role in the complex political fallout of the Revolt, has largely dominated histories of his life, but his actual military career between 1917-18 is fascinating in its own right. Lawrence the soldier was a military innovator who became a pioneer of modern guerrilla warfare, despite his complete lack of experience.

In 1916, the Ottoman Empire was in trouble. For centuries it had ruled a multicultural society made up of numerous nationalities and religions under an Islamic sultanate. Gradually though, it had begun to impose Turkish language and culture on all its subjects, an approach that was deeply resented by many in its majority Arab population.

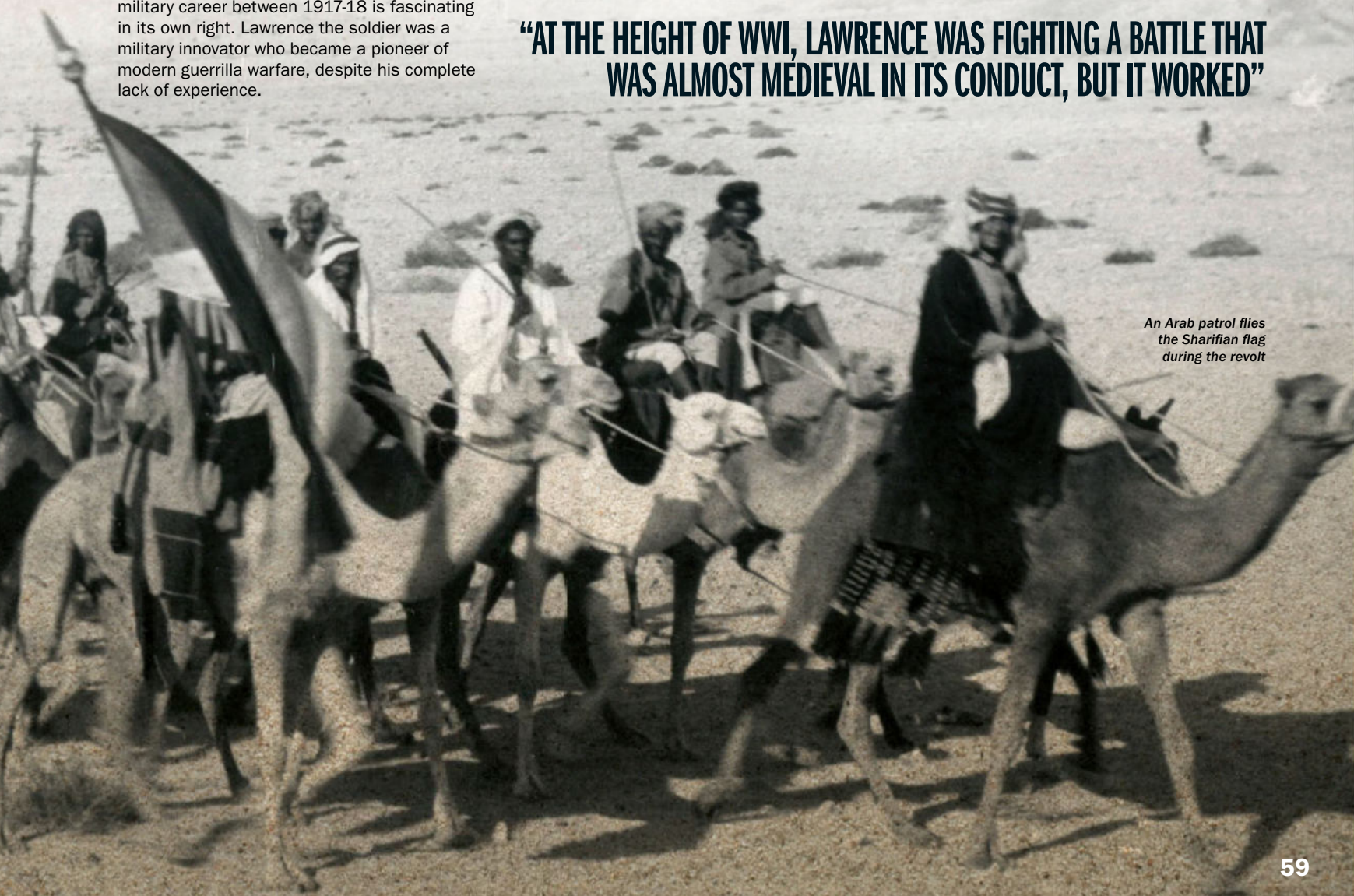
On 5 June 1916, the spiritual figurehead of Islam, Sharif Hussein of Mecca, declared a revolt against the Empire. Hussein was a descendent of the Prophet Mohammed, which gave his uprising an immediate prestige that the Ottomans couldn't ignore. However, the Empire had recently defeated the Allies at Gallipoli and was now busy committing genocide against its largely Christian Armenian subjects. This meant that any Ottoman

suppression of Hussein's Revolt would be swift and brutal – for the Arab rebels, the stakes couldn't have been higher.

Britain's main concern in the region was protecting the Suez Canal and Egypt from the advancing Turks. In October 1914, Lawrence had been plucked away from his archaeological work in Syria and transformed into a British intelligence officer, based in the newly formed Arab Bureau. When the Revolt erupted two years later, he was sent to negotiate a tentative alliance with the Arab rebels and to pick a leader to unite them. This would prove to be a seemingly impossible task. Sharif Hussein may have been a spiritual leader, but the elderly theologian was not a warrior or tactician that could co-ordinate a military campaign. Even more challenging were the rebels themselves,

**“AT THE HEIGHT OF WWI, LAWRENCE WAS FIGHTING A BATTLE THAT WAS ALMOST MEDIEVAL IN ITS CONDUCT, BUT IT WORKED”**

An Arab patrol flies the Sharifian flag during the revolt





who held disparate tribal allegiances and frequently fought among themselves.

Despite this, the rebels initially managed to capture small towns bordering the Red Sea. It was during these attacks that Lieutenant Lawrence noticed that Hussein's third son – Emir Faisal, a patient, tactful and determined fighter – was the perfect candidate for the Revolt's leadership. Once Lawrence reported his suitability to his British superiors, he was sent back to act as Faisal's adviser. The pair bribed tribal chiefs and resolved many long feuds in order to raise a substantial, if undisciplined, army. To ease negotiations, Faisal gave Lawrence expensive robes, which were a visible sign of his status. Once the preparations were complete, the rebels were ready to fight the Turks with renewed gusto.

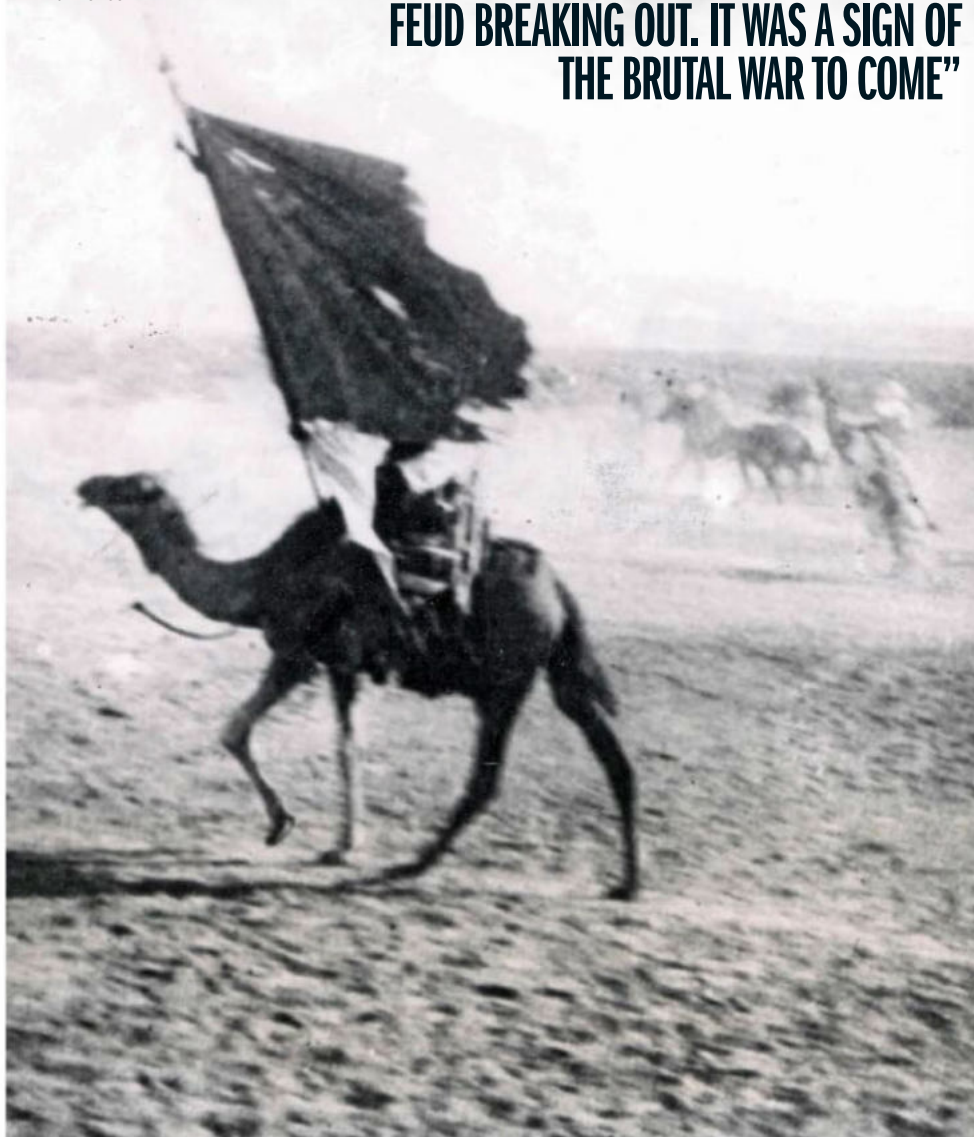
### Derailing Ottoman power

Lawrence saw his first action on 3 January 1917, when he and a group of 35 tribesmen attacked an enemy encampment, which they peppered with rifle fire before being driven away. They returned and captured two Turks for questioning, but Lawrence's small victory ended when he had to personally execute one of the tribesmen to prevent a feud breaking out. It was a sign of the brutal war to come.

Soon afterwards, Lawrence rode out with Faisal and his army to attack the coastal town of Wejh on the Red Sea. The town was captured and the surrounding coast cleared of Turks – a success that convinced the British to supply the rebels with weapons, equipment and money. The Arab rebels now concentrated on guerrilla tactics to disrupt the symbol of Ottoman power in the Middle East: the Hejaz Railway. This formidable network was a single-track railway that stretched 800 miles between Damascus and Medina.

The line had been constructed between 1900-08 to transport Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and reduced the journey time from a month to three days, but it also projected Ottoman military force into Arabia. There were 79 stations along the line, which meant an average of one station every ten miles and many were fortified. As the Revolt progressed, blockhouses and miniature forts were

Arab camels riding towards Aqaba, July 1917. The rider is bearing a flag in triumph. Aqaba was a turning point during the Arab Revolt and was largely masterminded by TE Lawrence



**“LAWRENCE'S SMALL VICTORY ENDED WHEN HE HAD TO PERSONALLY EXECUTE ONE OF THE TRIBESMEN TO PREVENT A FEUD BREAKING OUT. IT WAS A SIGN OF THE BRUTAL WAR TO COME”**

## WHO'S WHO OF THE REVOLT

THE SUCCESS OF THE ARAB REVOLT WAS AIDED BY A MOTLEY COLLECTION OF GENERALS, TRIBESMEN, ARCHAEOLOGISTS & DEFECTORS

### PRINCE FAISAL



Faisal was the third son of Sharif Hussein and led the Arab Revolt. Lawrence

worked closely with him and was greatly impressed with the prince, “I felt at first glance that this was the man I had come to seek – the leader who would bring the Arab Revolt to full glory.”

### AUDA ABU TAYI



Auda was the head of the Howeitat tribe and was described by Lawrence as, “the greatest fighting man in northern

Arabia”. His tribesmen were some of the best fighters of the region and significantly contributed to the revolt's success, particularly at Aqaba. Auda had reputedly killed 75 Arabs with his own hand and didn't bother to count the Turks.

### EDMUND ALLENBY



As commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force Allenby was one of the most successful British commanders of WWI. He led a

successful campaign against the Turks, capturing Jerusalem and winning a great victory at Megiddo. He was also shrewd and gave Lawrence a free hand to develop the Arabs as effective allies during the march to Damascus.

### GERTRUDE BELL



Like Lawrence, Bell was an adventurous archaeologist and adviser on Arabian

affairs to the British government. She was a passionate supporter of Arab independence and helped to create the borders of modern Iraq, installing Faisal as its first king in 1921.

### MUHAMMED SHARIF AL-FARUQI



Al-Faruqi was a shadowy Arab officer in the Ottoman army who defected to the British claiming to have vital information. He made

distorted claims that it was in their best interests to support an independent Arab state while also influencing Mark Sykes to formulate the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which undermined Arab sovereignty. His lies sowed the seeds for regional chaos.



# T. E. LAWRENCE & THE ARAB REVOLT 1916-18

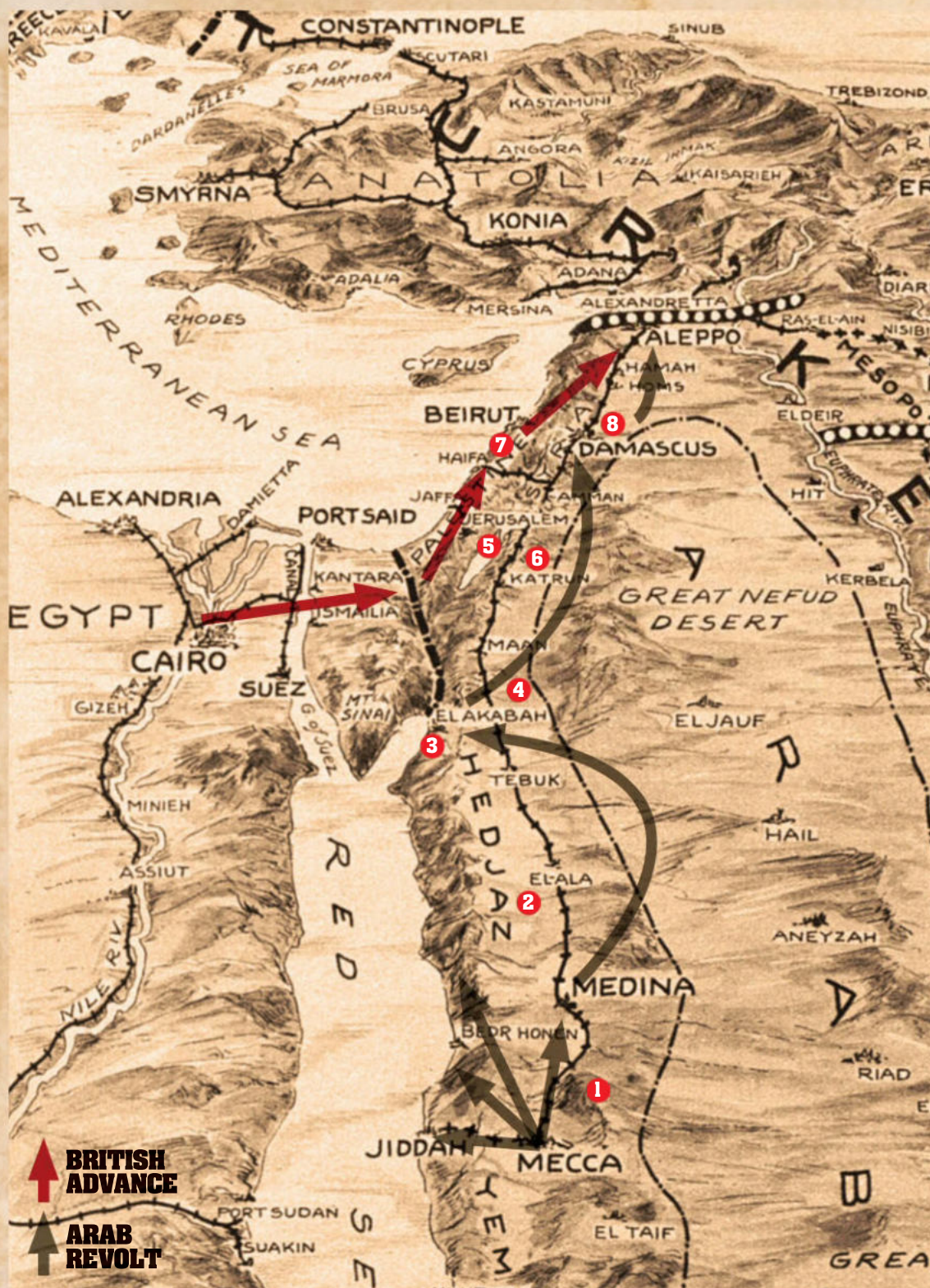
THE REVOLT WAS AN EPIC JOURNEY FROM TENTATIVE BEGINNINGS IN SOUTHERN ARABIA TO THE TRIUMPHANT LIBERATION OF DAMASCUS

Unlike the stalemates of the Western Front, the campaign in the Middle East was highly mobile, with Arab rebels playing a crucial role as part of their revolt against the Ottoman Empire. It began

as a relatively small-scale uprising in and around Mecca but soon grew into a full-scale revolution that was aided by the British largely under the sympathetic guidance of TE Lawrence.

It was a peculiarly old-fashioned but also highly modern campaign that blended traditional cavalry charges and battlefield tactics with innovative air attacks and guerrilla warfare. This included destroying railways and communication networks, as well as combining the highly mechanised Allied armies with nomadic tribesmen.

## “THE CAMPAIGN IN THE MIDDLE EAST WAS HIGHLY MOBILE”



### 1 JUNE-JULY 1916

Sharif Hussein declares the Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule. Rebels attack Medina, take control of Mecca and capture the Red Sea ports of Jeddah, Yanbu and Rabigh.

### 2 JANUARY-MAY 1917

The rebels capture Wejh and are accompanied by TE Lawrence. Guerrilla attacks on the Hejaz Railway intensify over the next few months.

### 3 MAY-JULY 1917

Lawrence and Arab leaders travel over 600 miles through the desert to recruit tribesmen for an assault on the strategic port of Aqaba, which is subsequently captured on 6 July.

### 4 JULY-DECEMBER 1917

The rebels continue their attacks on the Hejaz Railway with increased British support and achieve considerable success, pinning down thousands of Turkish troops.

### 5 11 DECEMBER 1917

The Egyptian Expeditionary Force under General Edmund Allenby captures Jerusalem. Allenby and Lawrence walk into the city on foot as a sign of respect for its religious importance.

### 6 24 JANUARY 1918

Lawrence wins a small-scale, but well-executed, pitched battle at Tafila in modern day Jordan. Arab riflemen and cavalry beat off a superior Turkish force.

### 7 SEPTEMBER 1918

Allenby wins a decisive victory at Megiddo, which virtually destroys an Ottoman Army. In the aftermath, Lawrence and the Arabs destroy a Turkish brigade in revenge for a civilian massacre in Tafas.

### 8 1 OCTOBER 1918

Damascus is liberated after Australian cavalymen clear the way for the Arab Northern Army to enter the city. Lawrence reorganises the administration in four days before departing to Britain.



*Auda ibn Tayi was considered to be one of the finest Arab warriors of his time*

constructed in-between these stations and all were garrisoned by Ottoman soldiers. This pinned down thousands of men across a huge desert, but in theory this meant that the railway was untouchable. At Medina alone there were 15-16,000 troops, but the Ottomans had failed to reckon with a traditional, but effective vehicle of the desert: the camel.

The Arab Revolt was largely defined by successful guerrilla attacks against the Hejaz Railway and aided by the durability of the camel. Nomadic Arab tribes had travelled on camels for centuries and the rebels used them to good effect. Water and grazing were found en route and each man could carry food for six weeks in his saddlebag. Lawrence later wrote, "This gave us a range of over a thousand miles out and home and that was more than ever we needed, even in so large a country as Arabia."

During 1917-18 the rebels struck everywhere, with every station on the railway being under the threat of attack. They were also armed with long-range rifles, machine guns and mortars, which enabled them to disappear into the desert. The Ottomans found themselves fighting an insurgency that was everywhere and nowhere, and could not defend the entire line. In this way, 100 rebels could often pin down thousands of Ottoman soldiers.

Lawrence took part in his first railway raid in March 1917 when he helped to attack a Turkish station at Abu el-Naam. After reconnoitring the area he planted a mine under the tracks at night and cut telegraph wires. The next morning the rebels overran the station with the help of a howitzer and a mountain gun, which set several rail wagons on fire. As the train left the station, Lawrence detonated the mine under the front of the engine, knocking it off the rails. Although the Ottomans got the train rolling again, the operation was a huge success.

Railway smashing became Lawrence and the rebels' speciality, although the raids were by no means easy to achieve. There were constant shortages of food and water as the camels rode at top speeds to get to different strike points and Arab brigands would often rob or kill any stragglers. The rebels themselves were also obsessed with plunder from the raids and would often leave when they collected enough loot. They also bitterly fought among themselves in tribal feuds and Lawrence had difficulty maintaining discipline.

During one six-day ride, he had to settle 12 cases of armed assault, several thefts, a marriage and divorce, 14 feuds and even a bewitchment. Although destroying the railway was a very useful strategy, Lawrence had a romantic vision that the rebels could achieve great victories off their own backs and thereby make their claims for Arab independence become a reality. To that end he conceived a

**"THE TURKS WERE SURPRISED BUT THE REBEL FIRE WAS INEFFECTUAL. LAWRENCE GOADED AUDA BY SAYING THE ARABS, 'SHOOT A LOT AND HIT LITTLE'"**



plan for the rebels to attack a vital strategic port on the Red Sea: Aqaba.

### Into the path of terror

Without authorisation from his British superiors, Lawrence proposed that a troop of Arabs could make their way across the desert and assault the city of Aqaba, not from the heavily fortified coast, but from inland. An Arab victory would mean the British could ship supplies to the rebels and put additional pressure on the Turks. Faisal approved the plan and, on 9 May 1917, Lawrence left Wejh with 50 men, led by Sharif Nasir of Syria, and the renowned warrior leader of the Howeitat tribe, Auda abu Tayi. Lawrence himself rode a camel in his Arab robes, carried 22,000 gold sovereigns and was the only British representative on the journey.

He used the gold to bribe local tribesmen to join his band and their numbers swelled to 700 fighters who assisted in blowing up railway lines on the way. However, this was a hazardous 600-mile round journey through inhospitable terrain that even the Bedouin called 'al-houl' ('the Terror'). Lawrence broke away and travelled a further 300 miles north to recruit

## "RAILWAY SMASHING BECAME LAWRENCE AND THE REBELS' SPECIALITY, ALTHOUGH THE RAIDS WERE BY NO MEANS EASY TO ACHIEVE"

more support, even reaching the outskirts of Damascus before reuniting with the main force who finally fell on Aqaba from behind.

On 2 July, a crucial battle was fought at a Turkish outpost at Aba el Lissan, just outside the city. The Turks were surprised but the rebel fire was ineffectual. Lawrence goaded Auda by saying the Arabs, "Shoot a lot and hit little." This spurred Auda to launch a cavalry charge at the Turks, who were then defeated and the rebels rode into Aqaba, virtually unopposed, on 6 July. However, Lawrence's adventures were not over, as there were thousands of troops to feed and no food, so he immediately travelled 150 miles across the Sinai Peninsula to inform the British and bring supplies.

The victory was remarkable. Lawrence was promoted to Major, received the Companionship of the Bath, and was recommended for the Victoria Cross. Nonetheless, dark political clouds were looming.

### Imperial betrayal

Unknown to the Arabs, the British and French had signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement that planned to divide Arabian lands among the imperial powers. Lawrence, who had told the rebels they were fighting for independence, was appalled and had to lie to the Arabs about Allied intentions. He complained to a British colleague: "We are calling on them to fight for us on a lie, and I can't stand it."

He later wrote, "Instead of being proud of what we did together, I was continually and bitterly ashamed." Even so, the revolt had to continue, especially as the Allies were gearing up for an advance into Palestine from Egypt. The rebels continued their attacks on the Hejaz Railway, largely without British assistance.

From July-September 1917, the railway was attacked once every three days and the results were impressive. 30 bridges, 17 locomotives and many more wagons were destroyed and

## AN HISTORIC BETRAYAL

THE FALLOUT OF THE ARAB REVOLT LED TO UNFULFILLED HOPES AND POLITICAL BUNGLING. THIS SHAPED THE BORDERS AND TENSIONS THAT STILL FUEL TURMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The impact of the Allied victory in the Middle East was far-reaching and had consequences that still reverberate in the present day. The Arabs had been led to believe that they had been fighting for independence with Allied help, but the opposite was true. The British and French had signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916, which carved up the Ottoman Empire into European zones of occupation. The British would rule Palestine and Mesopotamia (Iraq) and the French were given Syria and the Lebanon. The Arabs themselves were denied full control in their own lands.

This act of blatant imperialism deeply angered Lawrence who was dedicated to the cause of Arab self-determination. He had proposed that the Middle East be divided into three kingdoms ruled by Sharif Hussein's sons: Faisal, Abdullah and Zeid and invited Faisal to accompany him to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to promote the Arab cause. However, despite huge publicity and eloquent arguments, the Arabs were ignored and Sykes-Picot was upheld. The new imperial 'mandates' were given new, artificial borders by the European powers that still exist today and have contributed to the regions present instability.

There were other consequences that would have profound implications. The Ottoman Empire was reduced to its heartland in Anatolia and Turkish nationalists under Mustafa Kemal

launched a revolution that saw the establishment of a new Turkish republic, defeated an invading Greek army, deposed the sultan and brought over 700 years of Ottoman rule to an end.

Perhaps the most inflammatory imperial policy was the Balfour Declaration of 1917. In that year, British armies were in the process of occupying Palestine but over the previous decades a Zionist movement had grown with increasing calls for a Jewish homeland, in the wake of centuries of persecution. The declaration was a statement by the British government to leading Zionists and said, "His Majesty's Government view

with favour the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people."

The native Palestinians were given little thought. In 1917, Palestine only had a Jewish population of 50,000 but in the wake of the declaration the population rose to 600,000 by 1947, particularly after the Holocaust, with the eventual foundation of Israel in 1948, with dire consequences for regional stability in the Middle East. Of all the imperial policies of WWI, the unconsidered plans for Palestine have had the most enduring and bitter consequences that are still unresolved.

**"THE ARABS HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT THEY HAD BEEN FIGHTING FOR INDEPENDENCE WITH ALLIED HELP"**



Prince Faisal (centre) and Lawrence (third from right) at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Lawrence unsuccessfully lobbied for the creation of three Arab states ruled by Faisal and his brothers



10,000 rails were torn up. Lawrence intended to keep the Hejaz Railway, "just in working order, but only just," enough to distract the Ottomans from the huge advance of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force under General Edmund Allenby.

Allenby was one of the best generals of the war and captured Jerusalem in December 1917, becoming the first European commander to take the city since the Crusades. Lawrence, who was a passionate medievalist, entered the city with Allenby on foot in British uniform saying, "For me it was the most memorable moment of the war, the one which, for historical reasons, made a stronger appeal than anything on Earth."

### The road to Damascus

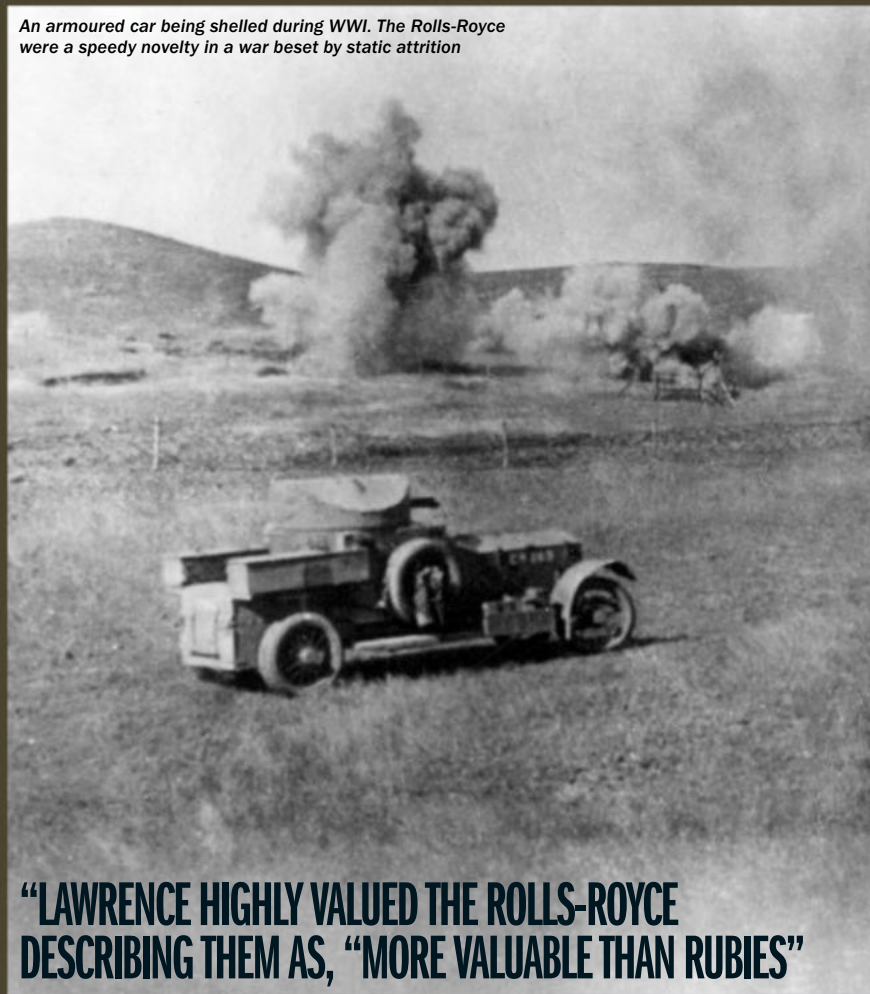
Jerusalem was followed by Lawrence's only pitched-battle victory of the campaign, at the Battle of Tafila in late January 1918. 600 Arabs had advanced on Tafila but their presence alerted 1,000 Ottomans of the 48th Division, who marched to fight the rebels. A tactical retreat was preferable, but that meant exposing the villagers of Tafila to Turkish retribution. Faisal's brother Zeid was ostensibly in command but Lawrence took the initiative by forming the rebels on a ridge outside the town that blocked the Ottoman path.



Lawrence on his Brough Superior SS100 which he named George V

## THE ROLLS-ROYCE ARMoured CAR

An armoured car being shelled during WWI. The Rolls-Royce were a speedy novelty in a war beset by static attrition



**"LAWRENCE HIGHLY VALUED THE ROLLS-ROYCE DESCRIBING THEM AS, "MORE VALUABLE THAN RUBIES"**

**LAWRENCE PIONEERED THE USE OF ARMoured VEHICLES IN THE DESERT, WHICH SUCCESSFULLY CONTRIBUTED TO A CAMPAIGN BASED ON SPEED AND FIREPOWER**

By late 1917 Lawrence had a squadron of nine Rolls Royce armoured cars, manned with British crews to aid the Arab Revolt. The cars were a steel-plated version of the 'Silver Ghost' with a strengthened chassis to support a steel cylinder, which was five feet in diameter. This cylinder housed a Vickers-Maxim machine gun and the revolving turret was highly effective against infantry whilst protecting the crew. Most of the car body was covered with bulletproof armoured plating and its wheels were inlaid with metallic rims, which enabled it to traverse across rough terrain. Two spare wheels were also provided to minimise puncture damage and they could travel at speeds of 45 miles per hour, with a range of 149 miles.

Lawrence highly valued the Rolls-Royce describing them as, "More valuable than rubies." He witnessed their effectiveness between 27-28 December 1917 when an Ottoman trench at Tell Shahm Station was machine-gunned by the cars, with the returning Turkish fire being ragged and ineffective. Lawrence noted, "Armoured car work seemed fighting deluxe, for our troops, being steel-covered, could come to no hurt." The cars satisfied Lawrence's passion for speed and adequately met his strategic demands.

On 19 April 1918, Lawrence and his car squadron attacked the Turkish position of Mudawwara and carried out a series of high speed demolitions, with each car being laden with two tonnes of explosives, "Bridges and rails roared up about us on all sides, whenever fancy took us. The crews of the cars covered themselves under the turrets of their cars when stones or iron fragments came sailing through the smoky air. We enjoyed ourselves." When the Arab army liberated Damascus on 1 October 1918, Lawrence entered the city, not on a camel, but in his own open top Rolls-Royce called 'Blue Mist'.



Arab snipers skirmished with the advancing Turks, which caused them to halt. The skirmishing turned into a long-range firefight but the Arabs had the edge as Lawrence had paced out the ground beforehand.

The rebels, supported by local armed peasants and machine guns, assaulted the Turkish line from three sides, causing the Turks to collapse. Lawrence and Zeid then ordered the Arab main line to charge. One of Zeid's household retinue, "led them on his camel, in shiny wind-billowed robes, holding the crimson banner of the Ageyl high over his head."

At the height of WWI, Lawrence was fighting a battle that was almost medieval in its conduct, but it worked. The Ottoman commander was mortally wounded and the Turks were routed. For 100 Arab casualties, the Turks lost 600 dead. Lawrence was again promoted, this time to lieutenant colonel, and awarded the Distinguished Service Order. His standing among the Arabs was reaching great heights. Lawrence was often greeted by horsemen with the cry of, "Ya Aurens!" and an Australian pilot observed, "The Arabs [stopped] in the streets to kiss his robes."

By September 1918, Allenby was pushing towards Damascus and won a complete victory at Megiddo with a skilful combination of air attacks and cavalry charges, which routed the Turkish Army. Lawrence and his Arab allies had helped by cutting railway lines around Deraa, but success came at a cost. After Megiddo, a retreating brigade of Turks massacred the

inhabitants of Tafas, south of Damascus, including women and children. The advancing Arabs were so enraged that they caught up with the brigade and annihilated them in revenge. Lawrence wrote, "By my order no prisoners were taken, for the only time in our war."

Despite the carnage, however, the end was in sight. Damascus was not a fortress but its status in the Middle East was predominant, with a population of 300,000 and home to diverse cultures and religions. It had been the first capital of the Islamic global empire, which started in the mid-7th century CE and was the last of the six great cities of Arabian Islam to still be held by the Ottomans. Lawrence saw an Arab liberation of Damascus in a highly symbolic light, but the first troops to arrive on 1 October 1918 were Australian cavalrymen who chased the remaining Turks out of the city to clear the way for the Arabs.

Lawrence drove into Damascus at 9am on 1 October to a tumultuous reception with the streets, "nearly impassable with the crowds, who yelled themselves hoarse... Auda abu Tayi and myself were cheered by name, covered with flowers, kissed indefinitely, and splashed with attar of roses from the house-tops."

To prevent the Allies from asserting control, he became the Acting Governor of Damascus. In four days, he organised a new administration including setting up utilities, a police force, food distribution, repairing the railway and introduced a new currency. The Allies continued to push back the Turks, capturing Beirut, Tripoli

and Aleppo. On 30 October, the Ottoman Empire requested an armistice, having lost Palestine, Syria, Iraq and Arabia.

Lawrence's efforts in Damascus resulted in the establishment of an Arab Constitutional Government under Faisal that avoided total French control until 1920. Regardless, Britain and France ruthlessly carved up the Middle East between them and never established the Arab independence that Lawrence dreamed of, creating a deep resentment that still lingers. Some fundamentalists have even called the establishment of the so-called 'Islamic State' as the 'End of Sykes-Picot' and have used the imperial mistakes of WWI to justify their gruesome campaign of terror and violence.

Though Lawrence could not have foreseen this, he was devastated by the betrayal of the Arabs and left Damascus, on 4 October 1918, a broken man. "I had been born free, and a stranger to those whom I had led for the two years," he would later comment. "It seemed that I had given them all my gift, this false liberty drawn down to them by spells and wickedness, and nothing was left for me but to go away. The dead army of my hopes confronted me, and my will broke suddenly in my hand and fell useless."

*Below: Lawrence riding a camel during the revolt. He ingratiated himself with the Arabs by immersing himself in their culture and suffered their privations in the field*

**"IT SEEMED THAT I HAD GIVEN THEM ALL MY GIFT, THIS FALSE LIBERTY DRAWN DOWN TO THEM BY SPELLS AND WICKEDNESS, AND NOTHING WAS LEFT FOR ME BUT TO GO AWAY"**

— TE Lawrence





# UH-1H IROQUOIS “HUEY”

WORDS TOM GARNER

The ‘sound’ of the Vietnam War is not just a symbol of the USA’s involvement, but also an outstanding aircraft that changed the rules of combat survival for the better

The Bell UH-1 Iroquois helicopter is one of the most iconic symbols of American involvement in the Vietnam War (1955-75), and the distinctive noise of its rotor blades have led American veterans to describe it as the ‘sound of our war’. It first entered service in 1959 and over 16,000 of these powerful helicopters have been produced in the years since. During the war the Iroquois was nicknamed ‘Huey’ thanks to its early ‘HU-1’ designation (which was later changed to UH-1). This name became so common that the AH-1 attack version was officially named the ‘Huey Cobra’.

From 1965-73 the UH-1 Huey was the most common utility helicopter used in Vietnam and is the most produced variant of the model. It was primarily used to transport troops for aerial attacks, medical evacuations and transporting cargo. Hueys clocked up a total of 7,531,955 flight hours during the war and over 2,500 were destroyed.

Over 10 per cent of all combat deaths in Vietnam occurred in helicopter operations, with 6,175 fatalities, but Hueys also helped to airlift over 90,000 patients. During World War II and the Korean War, hospitalisation time was measured in days, but Hueys could transport a wounded soldier from the field to hospital in less than one hour, dramatically increasing wartime survival rates.

This particular photographed aircraft is an ‘H’ model, a type that would have been used in Vietnam. It was stationed on a US Army base in Germany and now resides in the American Air Museum as part of the Imperial War Museum Duxford.





## UH-1H IROQUOIS 'HUEY'

**MANUFACTURER:** BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON (USA)  
**INITIAL YEAR OF SERVICE:** 1959  
**POWER PLANT:** LYCOMING T53-L-11 TURBO SHAFT ENGINE DELIVERING 1,100 SHP  
**MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT:** 4,100 KG (9,039 LBS)  
**PAYLOAD:** 2,200 LBS (IN ADDITION TO FUEL AND CREW OF 4)  
**SPEED:** 220 KM/H (137 MPH)  
**RANGE:** 510 KM (317 MILES)  
**CEILING:** 5,910 M (19,390 FT)  
**CREW:** 4  
**PASSENGERS:** 12 MAXIMUM  
**ARMAMENT:** HIGHLY VARIABLE DEPENDING ON ROLE AND OPERATOR

*The UH-1's official name is 'Iroquois' but the helicopter was commonly named 'Huey' and the name stuck*

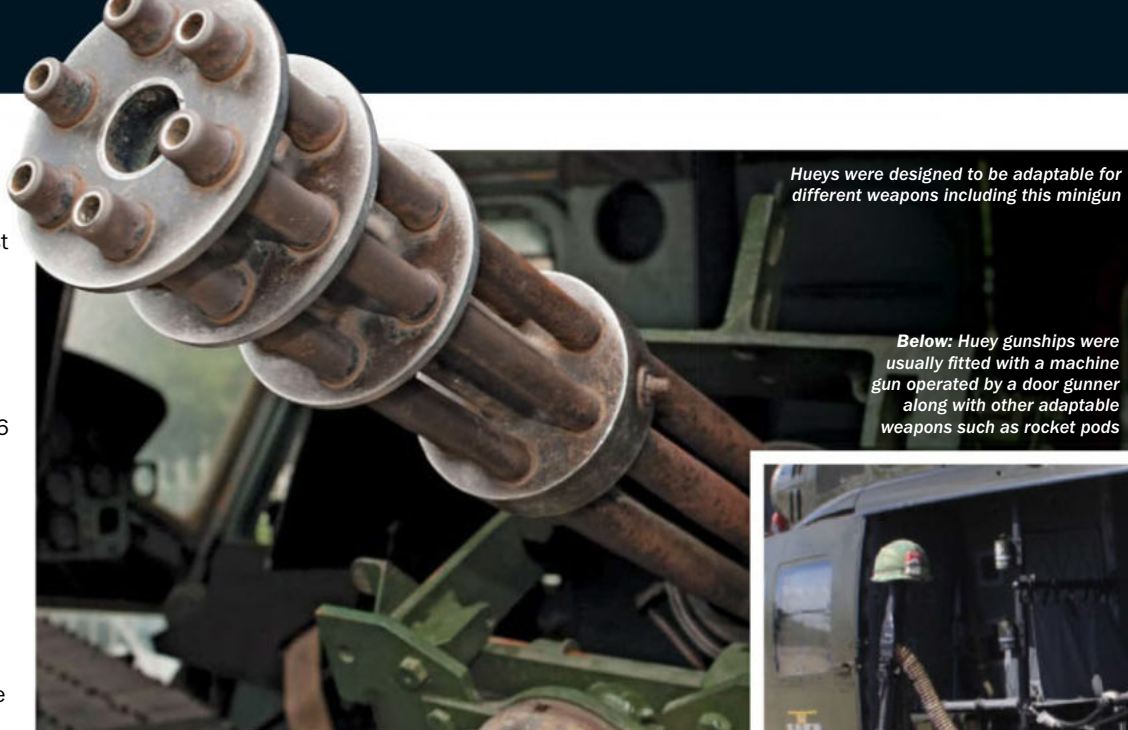
**"DURING WORLD WAR II AND THE KOREAN WAR HOSPITALISATION TIME WAS MEASURED IN DAYS, BUT HUEYS COULD TRANSPORT A WOUNDED SOLDIER FROM THE FIELD TO HOSPITAL IN LESS THAN ONE HOUR, DRAMATICALLY INCREASING WARTIME SURVIVAL RATES"**



## ARMAMENT

The Huey was lightly armed and vulnerable to anti-aircraft fire. Most were fitted with M-60D machine guns manned by the crew chief on the left, and the door gunner on the right. 2,000 rounds of linked ammunition could be carried in the helicopter. These two crewmembers also carried an M-16 rifle and carried coloured smoke grenades to mark targets when receiving hostile fire or to mark landing zones.

The officially unarmed pilots often carried unauthorised weapons slung over their seats for personal protection. Hueys could also adapt to be armed with torpedoes, miniguns, air-to-surface missiles and rocket pods.

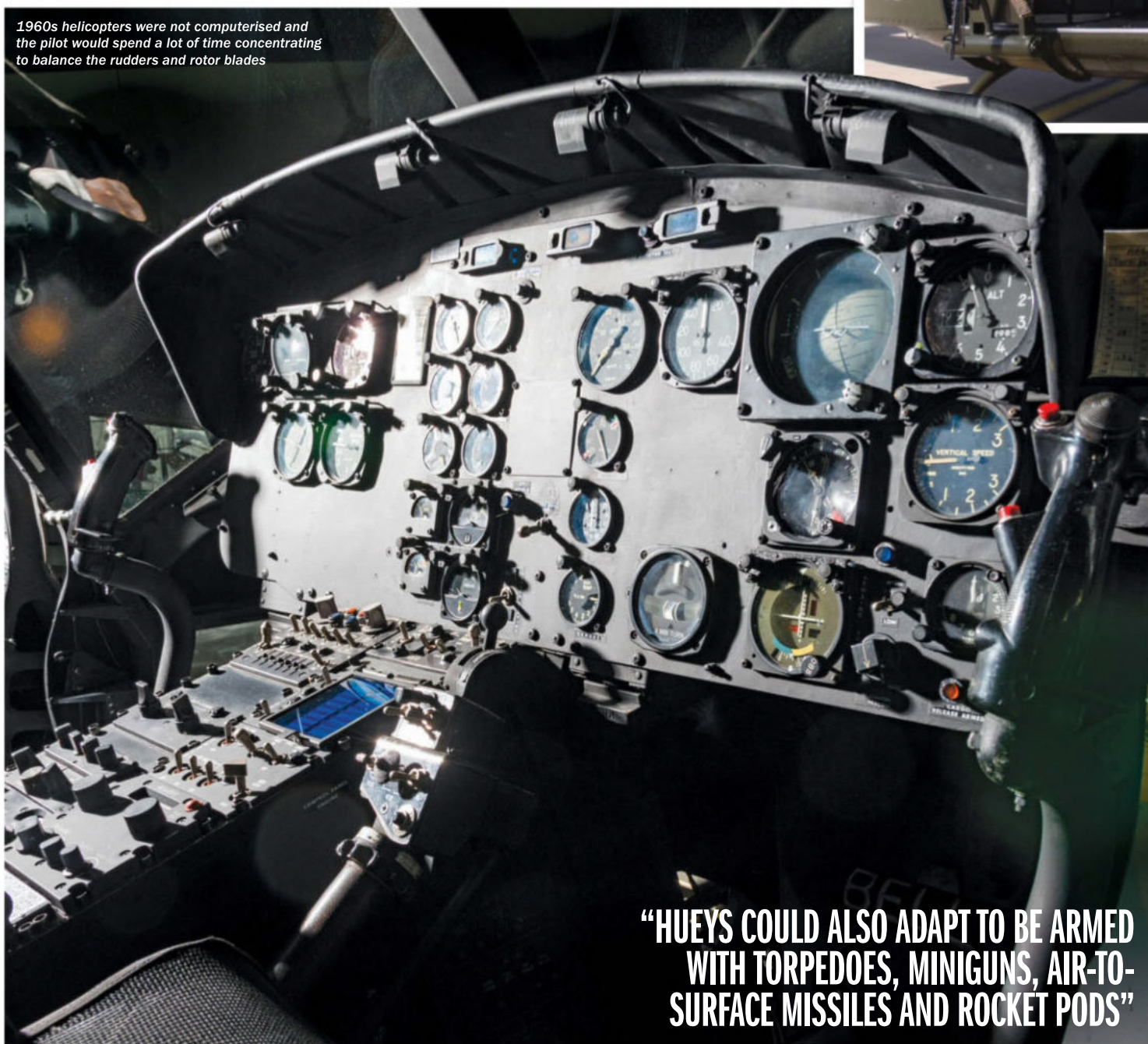


Hueys were designed to be adaptable for different weapons including this minigun

Below: Huey gunships were usually fitted with a machine gun operated by a door gunner along with other adaptable weapons such as rocket pods



1960s helicopters were not computerised and the pilot would spend a lot of time concentrating to balance the rudders and rotor blades



**"HUEYS COULD ALSO ADAPT TO BE ARMED WITH TORPEDOES, MINIGUNS, AIR-TO-SURFACE MISSILES AND ROCKET PODS"**



Including the crew, a Huey could seat up to 15 people, usually American infantrymen

## CREW AND PASSENGERS

The Huey was manned by four crewmembers. The Aircraft Commander (or A/C) was the main pilot and in command of the aircraft at all times during a mission. The co-pilot assisted the A/C and flew the aircraft when needed. The crew chief was responsible for maintaining the aircraft while the door gunner assisted the crew chief and manned the right door gun while flying. All crewmembers were issued with body armour jokingly referred to as 'chicken plates'.

The main passengers were usually six to eight American infantrymen en route to, or returning from, combat zones, but the Huey could seat 15 people or house six stretchers.



A Huey door gunner poses with the command chopper of Major General John H Hay Jr, commanding general of the 1st infantry division



A medical helicopter picks up an injured soldier of the 101st Airborne Division near the demilitarised zone in South Vietnam in 1969



Right: A Huey spraying Agent Orange over the Vietnam countryside in an effort to expose hidden fighters

## MISSIONS

The Huey's primary task was to carry infantry into combat, a procedure commonly called, 'combat assaults', which involved a 'package' of eight to ten Hueys transporting the infantry. These were supported by two to three gunships and observed by a Command and Control helicopter hovering overhead.

As a multi-purpose helicopter, the Huey had other missions including supplying food, water, ammunition and other necessities to infantry in the field or at forward bases. It was also used as a medical vehicle, transporting wounded soldiers to safety and treatment. Hueys are still used by various countries for fire-fighting missions, humanitarian aid, research operations and search and rescue duties.







**“THE HUEY WAS ONE OF THE FIRST HELICOPTERS TO USE A TURBINE JET ENGINE, WHICH WAS INSTALLED ABOVE THE FUSELAGE AND CLOSE TO THE MAIN ROTOR UNIT”**

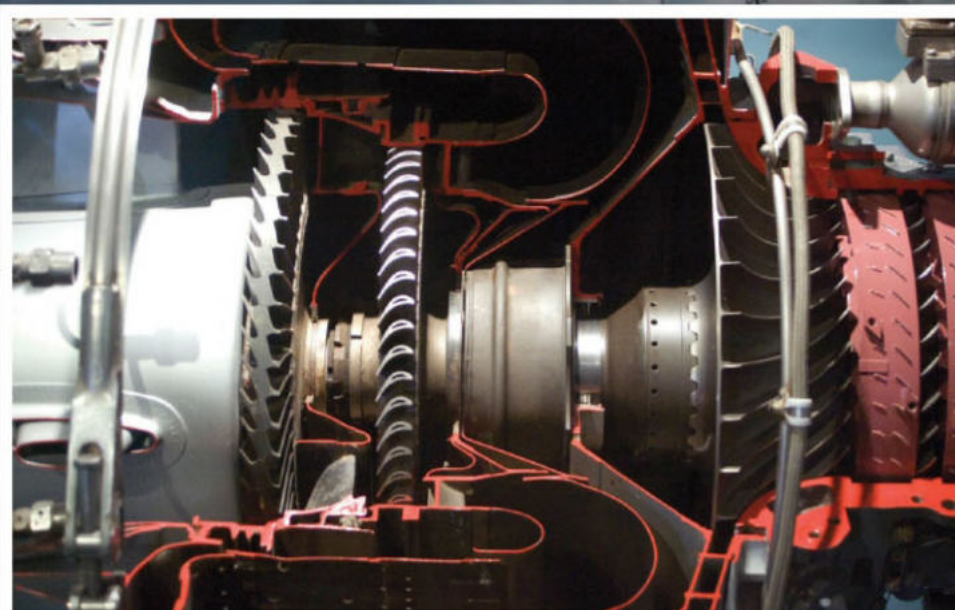
*Above: This small empty space would have housed the turbine engine, enabling a greater amount of cargo and passenger space*

*The rear of a UH-1H turbo shaft. This small, but powerful engine enabled the Huey to fly at speeds of up to 137mph and a range over 300 miles*

*Right: A Lycoming T-53 turbine engine powered the Huey. Since 1955, over 19,000 have been produced for both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft*

## ENGINE

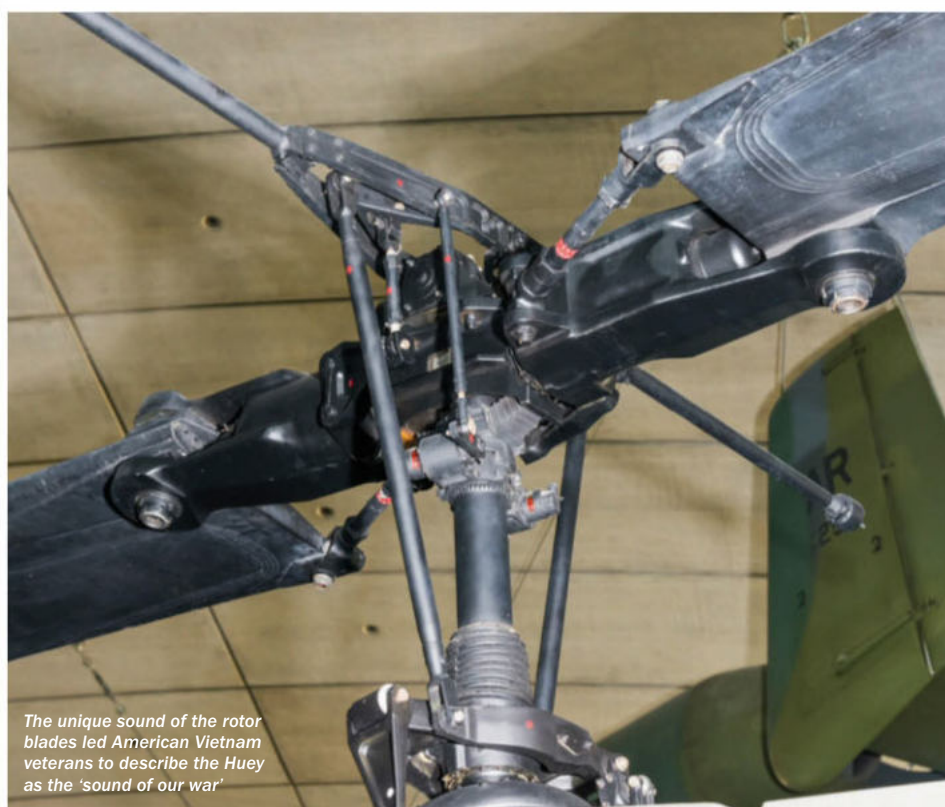
Piston engines powered early helicopters but this increased the aircraft weight and limited its flight capacity. The Huey was one of the first helicopters to use a turbine jet engine, which was installed above the fuselage and close to the main rotor unit. Turbine engines were expensive to build but they were durable, had great longevity and were very light considering their power output. Its small size meant that the helicopter could hold a larger cargo and transport more soldiers.







**“THE ARGENTINEAN ARMY  
USED NINE HUEYS AGAINST  
THE BRITISH DURING THE  
FALKLANDS WAR”**



*The unique sound of the rotor blades led American Vietnam veterans to describe the Huey as the 'sound of our war'*

## SERVICE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Although the Huey is thought of as a quintessentially American helicopter, it has been used on active service by many other countries in different conflicts. During the Salvadoran Civil War (1979-92), the El Salvador Air Force received over 100 Hueys from the

USA and were heavily engaged in combat. Only 34 survived the war. The Argentinean Army used nine Hueys against the British during the Falklands War, and, in the 2007 Lebanon conflict, the Lebanese Army modified several UH-1Hs to carry 227 kilograms of high explosives, which they then used to strike Islamist militant positions.



*An armed Huey named 'Death from above' lands in an unidentified village in central El Salvador in 1984*

Images: Alamy, Getty



This UH-1H Iroquois Huey is housed in the fully refurbished and reopened American Air Museum at the Imperial War Museum Duxford in Cambridgeshire.  
For more details visit: [www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford](http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford)



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## BRIEFING

# Hell Salvador

El Salvador has experienced a brutalising journey from crippling civil war, to becoming the homicide capital of the world, but what are the roots of this Central American nightmare?

WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA

It's impossible to escape the lush greenery of El Salvador's towns and cities. Even the capital, devoid of a familiar skyline, is almost sheltered by trees as it pays homage to the ancient volcano it's named after. The surrounding jungle nearly encroaches on the narrow streets where rows of casas are locked in pavement and inescapable penuriousness.

This picturesque image is shattered when the bodies are found and the police arrive. There are many ways to die in El Salvador, many of them at the hands of tattooed gang members from the maras.

In El Salvador the rift between Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, and Barrio 18 is a culture and lifestyle, albeit an abbreviated one. Their shadows reach into the overcrowded jails and even beyond the nation's borders.

The casualties produced by the maras are staggering. Statistics reveal there is one homicide committed, on average, every hour. The result is that tiny El Salvador – whose borders appear to have been traced from intersecting corners of Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua – is hell on Earth. How these infernal conditions came to exist is difficult to explain. It's even more disturbing to acknowledge that the violence between MS-13 and Barrio 18 has neither an origin nor an underlying cause.

This is its horror and its fascination. How can scenic El Salvador be engulfed in uncontrollable anarchy? There are sweeping generalisations, such as: the gangs are appendages to a regional narcotics trade and law and order are poorly enforced. El Salvador is where the one per cent has completely marginalised

the rest, so that destructive violence is the only alternative for the deprived. Neither of these explanations are adequate, however. The Salvadoran state is strong and secure – there aren't any forces threatening its power. The narcotraffickers are in Mexico, while the suppliers are in Colombia.

El Salvador's GDP-per-capita is higher than most developing countries in Asia and its population has been growing year-on-year for half a century. Fledgling domestic industries exist and El Salvador weathered the global financial crisis in 2008-09 thanks to prudent fiscal policies.

What it can't escape from, isn't its external debt to multinational institutions or American influence, but the terrible heritage of its recent past. One of the most vicious civil wars in Latin America was fought in El Salvador from 1980 until 1992. What it didn't resolve was El Salvador's curse; being a nation where the many serve the few.

It has now reached a point where Salvadoran society is overcrowded, disenfranchised, and near hopeless. The maras function as informal institutions for getting rid of young men and women who would otherwise contribute nothing to society.

### The coffee republic

The story of El Salvador dates to the Pipil Indians who migrated away from the declining Mayan civilisation several centuries before the Spanish arrived. It was the pole-vaulting conquistador, Pedro de Alvarado, who led expeditions into Pipil lands in hopes of adding to his many domains. His prize was along the

## LAND OF PERPETUAL VIOLENCE

1524

After years of campaigning, the Spanish Conquistadores subjugate the Pipil Indians and rename their dominion San Salvador. Arable land is divided into feudal encomiendas ruled by a manorial class.

1821

With the Spanish Empire in disarray after the Napoleonic Wars, the former Latin American colonies secure their independence. Several Central American provinces prevail against Spain by force of arms.

1823

Believing there is strength in unity, on 1 July the ruling junta in Guatemala created the Federal Republic of Central America combining Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.



Young victims of the Salvadoran Civil War, shot in the increasing violence leading up to the 1984 elections





## CENTRAL AMERICA

EL SALVADOR

**“THE CASUALTIES PRODUCED BY THE MARAS ARE STAGGERING. STATISTICS REVEAL THERE IS ONE HOMICIDE COMMITTED, ON AVERAGE, EVERY HOUR”**



coast of the Pacific Ocean, a place dotted sporadically with volcanoes where lush valleys perceived tropical splendour.

But the indigenous Pipil Indians, led by the chieftain Atlacatl, repulsed the Spaniards and their auxiliaries. It took successive invasions before the conquest subdued the indigenous people. Once a permanent settlement was established beneath the volcano, San Salvador, the new territory, was placed under the Captaincy General of Guatemala. The original Spanish settlers, who lorded over the Pipil Indians, grew wealthy from the export of indigofera suffruticosa, or the Indigo plant as it is better known to Europe.

The market for indigo collapsed by the 19th century and El Salvador emerged from the chaos of civil war. These circumstances stemmed from the political divisions that ripped apart the Federal Republic of Central America. What began as a visionary attempt at consolidating an entire region didn't survive the caudillo (a military land-owner), the stereotypical Hispanic strongmen who put more faith in violent action than the rhetoric of nascent democracy.

It can be argued the caudillo is the cog turning the wheels of Latin America from Mexico (Antonio López de Santa Anna) all the way down to Argentina (Juan Manuel de Rosas). They are the martial figures with an inordinate belief in themselves over accountable institutions. The Federal Republic of Central America was undone by caudilloism, not the excesses of a single bloodthirsty tyrant but many tyrants acting from parochial interests. The resulting maelstrom broke away part of Nicaragua and Honduras, and in 1841 El Salvador, the nation of Jesus Christ, rose.

It was in the middle of the 19th century when coffee emerged as the next viable export for El Salvador's landed gentry. It was a fortuitous time for its cultivation, as waves of immigrants from Western Europe, along with Palestine and Syria, were arriving. These weren't the poor and hungry from blighted nations searching for better lives. The influx brought skilled traders and entrepreneurs into an agrarian society blessed with surplus manpower and access to large foreign markets.

The coffee renaissance didn't elevate El Salvador above its neighbours – it served to worsen a social divide between land-owning families who extracted ceaseless toil from the campesinos (peasant farmers), the browbeaten peasantry who have been exploited since the Spanish raised their encomiendas (a dependency relation system that sees the stronger members supporting the weak), or the vast estates where Indians laboured for the benefit of a Don.

Power was once again in the hands of a caudillo, General Tomás Regalado, when he

## “NO ONE CAN BRING JUSTICE TO THE MUTILATED AND DISEMBOWELLED BODIES THAT LITTERED THE FOOTHILLS”

imposed himself on El Salvador in 1898 and was just as quickly deposed several years later. In typical caudillo fashion he never accomplished lasting social change and died in exile loathed by his countrymen in 1906. If Guatemala and its supplication to the United Fruit Company made it the quintessential banana republic, El Salvador was hardly different. It was a giant coffee plantation run by a cartel of aristocratic soldiers.

Regalado is recognised as the last of the 19th century caudillos, although, the archetype would surface once more in the 20th with individuals such as Fidel Castro in Cuba, Augusto Pinochet in Chile, various menacing juntas in Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, even including the late Hugo Chavez.

### March of the death squads

Regalado's brief tenure preserved El Salvador's oligarchic class, who grew rich from coffee exports, while leaving nothing for the campesinos trapped in gut-wrenching squalor. It wasn't until the Great Depression and the resulting ebb in commodity exports that a revolution broke out. This produced El Salvador's first ideological martyr, Farabundo Martí, and the return of the Salvadoran armed forces in national life to preserve the oligarchs' grip on power.

The army prevailed in 1932 by slaughtering up to 40,000 peasants, many of whom were Pipil Indians. They then used the presidential office as a vehicle for different leaders vetted by the armed forces. It was a curious 50-year charade that helped maintain El Salvador's internal cohesion. The stage was now set for the dark ages of Central America.

Untangling the beginning of the civil war, that gutted El Salvador from 1980 until 1992, exposes a twisted saga involving John F Kennedy, the CIA, the School of the Americas, cookie-cutter dictators, Israel, Cuba, the Sandinistas and the Contras, the Roman Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council, and Marxism-Leninism.

Not one of these subjects is useful for revisiting the sheer horror the civil war unleashed on the campesinos who suffered the most. It was their children, boys and girls, who were sucked into the ranks of the armed forces and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). No one can bring justice to the mutilated and disembowelled bodies that



Years of enforcing *Mano Dura* against thousands of gang members has militarised El Salvador's civilian police force



During the civil war both the government and the FMLN had no qualms about recruiting children

#### 1841

Internal divisions cause the Republic to fall apart. Secessionists plunge the federation into civil war. To resolve the crisis Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and newly minted El Salvador are granted independence.

#### 1880

Tiny El Salvador emerges as a leading coffee exporter in the world commodities market. Its economic life now comes under the control of land-owning families and enterprising immigrants from Europe and the Middle East.

#### 1932

The shock of the Great Depression collapses world coffee prices. Dissatisfaction leads to the peasant uprising led by Agustín Farabundo Martí. The Salvadoran armed forces intervene and slaughter up to 30,000 peasants, mostly Pipil Indians.

#### 1969

Honduras and El Salvador fight the so-called 'Soccer War' to no avail. Waged in the span of four days the conflict achieves nothing and has little impact on the domestic politics of either country.

#### 1979

After 50 years of de facto military rule, public dissatisfaction causes a left-wing underground movement to flourish. On 9 May, a protest organised by the Popular Revolutionary Bloc outside the Metropolitan Cathedral is met with gunfire.





A Salvadoran soldier prepares to move against FMLN guerrillas, 1989

littered the foothills of El Playon, the majestic volcano and favourite dumping ground used by death squads.

It's best to explain the civil war as dominoes. The first was the coup in 1979 that kept a military junta in power. This was the same junta whose soldiers opened fire on unarmed protesters on the steps of San Salvador's Metropolitan Cathedral on 9 May 1979. Next was the assassination of Archbishop Óscar Romero by gunmen linked to the right-wing ARENA party founded by Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former army officer trained by the US. The third was the rape and murder of four American missionaries by a Salvadoran death squad. The last to fall was the FMLN's brazen attempt at a Tet Offensive-esque power grab before Ronald Reagan became the president of the United States in January 1981.

The Reagan administration considered the crisis in El Salvador another front of potential Soviet Communist encroachment. The loss of Nicaragua was bad enough and Honduras was teetering as well. The solution was a sort of Vietnam redux, smaller in scale but just as devastating, with an accompanying flood of M16's and Huey gunships.

US largesse meant a billion dollars of aid was funnelled to the Salvadoran military – money that paid for the whole war – complete with Marines and Green Berets as advisers. It was only in the mid-1990s that citations and medals were awarded to the mysterious El Salvador veterans, whose numbers could have reached 5,000, for their clandestine work in a hot and dangerous place.

The 1985 documentary, *In the Name of the People*, shot by four American filmmakers, with narration by actor Martin Sheen, captures the other side of the coin in the FMLN. The struggle is a desperate one for the comrades – who appreciate every bit of token support from the Communist Bloc – and even from kind-hearted idealists like the American doctor Charlie Clements, a Vietnam veteran who was disillusioned by US foreign policy. Near the film's disheartening climax a shipment of B-40 rocket launchers arrives in the FMLN camp and the guerrillas affectionately name them 'Cubans.'

### Killing without reason

As early as the mid-1980s the leaders of El Salvador's right-wing government were contemplating a negotiated settlement with the FMLN, whose attacks on San Salvador were getting harder to repulse. The guerrillas were no longer ragtag peasants and had well-defended logistical networks in Nicaragua and Honduras with additional material support from Havana, Vietnam, and North Korea.

The Iran-Contra scandal – where profits from clandestine US-Israeli arms sales to Iran



**1980**

The popular Roman Catholic Archbishop Óscar Romero is assassinated on 24 March during mass. Five left-wing groups coalesce into the Frente de Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional and the civil war begins.

**1985**

On 19 June, assassins slaughter 13 people dining at a sidewalk restaurant in San Salvador. Among them are four off-duty US Marines serving as advisers to the Salvadoran military.

**1986**

A massive earthquake rocks San Salvador on 10 October, leaving thousands dead. In the same year the Salvadoran military received \$120 million in aid – a slight decrease from the previous year but the largest in Central America.

**1989**

Echoing the rape and murder of three nuns and an aid worker on 19 November 1980, six Jesuit priests are murdered in the Central American University for allegedly supporting leftist guerrillas.

**1992**

The Chapultepec Peace Accords, signed in Mexico City, ends the civil war that has killed 75,000 people. The FMLN demobilises and reinvents itself as a social democratic political party.



were funding anti-Sandinista rebels – had not only embarrassed the Reagan administration but undermined its vast project to defeat communism in Central America. When the 1992 Chapultepec Accords – signed in Mexico City – ended the civil war, the Salvadoran Diaspora, who had sought reprieve in the US, was incubating a new threat to their homeland.

It was in Los Angeles where poor and embattled Salvadoran families, somewhat relieved to have escaped the death squads and the guerrillas who recruited children, came under attack from the Hispanic community. This milieu, where Mexicans and other nationalities abused the fresh off the bus (and boat) Salvadorans, metastasised into the maras, named after the army ant in Central America.

The maras were the children looking after themselves in the mean streets of eastern Los Angeles and San Francisco, California. The MS-13 has no definite point of origin, except for its founder, Ernesto ‘Smokey’ Miranda, had grown disillusioned with the organisation he created upon reaching adulthood. Once he was deported to El Salvador by the US government, Miranda became an elder statesman for the gang, and attempted to advocate for human rights and job opportunities to help incarcerated MS-13 members.

But Miranda was gunned down, too, in 2006, a sorry death similar to how MS-13 eliminated its enemies; assassinated the way right-wing death squads did it during the civil war.

To pinpoint the singular moment when MS-13 grew from a teenage gang to a crime syndicate is rather difficult. Maybe during the 1980s its members invented a culture and a distinct set of norms – attire, hand signals, iconography – that set it on the warpath against its nemesis: the Barrio 18.

It’s assumed that between the late 1990s and the 2000s the influx of Americanised gang members in El Salvador allowed them to flourish in their newfound underworld. Facing rejection and discrimination from the Salvadoran government, the maras – especially MS-13 – rallied, recruited, and found lucrative opportunities in kidnapping and other petty criminal activities.

The scale of these enterprises, not to mention the resulting high body count, compelled the right-wing and pro-American ARENA president, Francisco Flores, to launch the Mano Dura in 2003. This was an uncompromising purge of gang members from the streets and into the prisons.

What Mano Dura achieved was to turn the subculture of gangs into a counter-culture, a vicious alternative to the societal decay prevalent in ‘normal’ El Salvador. Crowded into jails, and living in abysmal conditions, the rites of gang membership assumed a false sacredness. To be initiated meant joining in



A French-made Panhard AML armoured car used by the Ejército de El Salvador



Civilians are evacuated to prevent them being caught in the crossfire as government forces sweep the area

## 2003

The mass deportation of Salvadoran gang members imported MS-13 to its homeland and the maras' numbers reach thousands. President Francisco Flores launches the plan Mano Dura to crack down on gang activity.

## 2009

With 71 homicides per 100,000 people, El Salvador is the most violent country in the Western Hemisphere. The rivalry between MS-13 and Barrio 18 has spilled over to Honduras and Guatemala.

## 2012

Gang leaders of MS-13 and Barrio 18 broker a truce to de-escalate their activities in homicides, kidnapping, and extortion. The agreement forged in an undisclosed maximum-security prison is guarded by hundreds of soldiers.

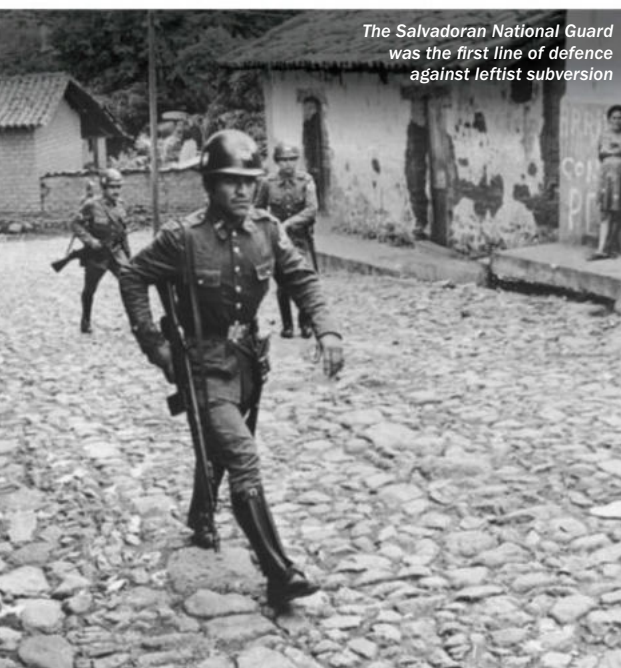
## 2013

Even if the MS-13 and Barrio 18 truce leads to a drop in crime gang members continue murdering each other. The truce collapses by the year's end and the Salvadoran police continue suppressing gang activity.

## 2014

Former FMLN guerrilla commander, Salvador Sánchez Cerén, wins over the ARENA candidate during the presidential elections. Statistics gathered mid-year reveal 14 homicides are committed per day across El Salvador.





The Salvadoran National Guard was the first line of defence against leftist subversion



your early teens and enduring an assault by other gang members. For MS-13, the beating lasts 13 seconds and the inductee is then welcomed by his new family.

The gangs also have hierarchies and leadership is decentralised but multi-faceted. The governors who make the important decisions are the Palabreros, the ones who have the last word on any business. The un-incarcerated Palabreros watch over the canchas (enclaves) throughout the country. Within each cancha are the tribes, with their appointed leaders and each tribe is made up of smaller cliques.

Within the maras, symbolism is a matter of life and death. Tattooing is strictly controlled and to attain ink is a way of signalling rank, as well as accomplishment. Those whose faces are covered have proven their value to the gang and will kill in its name. It's claimed the Barrio 18 cliques even have their own checks and balances: never be caught high or drunk in public; girlfriends are to be respected; rape is punishable by death; avenge the wrongs committed against your brothers.

Despite this, the attitudes of gang members towards women are conflicted at best. Although females can join the ranks, there are volumes of evidence gathered by Salvadoran police chronicling rapes and femicides linked to gangs. One Christian social worker went as far as describing the sexual politics of the maras as 'Neolithic' (belonging to the Stone Age). Women are a possession to be used and shared among cliques and discarded after.

## "WHAT MANO DURA ACHIEVED WAS TO TURN THE SUBCULTURE OF GANGS INTO A COUNTER-CULTURE, A VICIOUS ALTERNATIVE TO THE SOCIETAL DECAY PREVALENT IN 'NORMAL' EL SALVADOR"

El Salvador's gang problem doesn't appear to have a tangible end. When the former FMLN guerrilla leader, Salvador Sánchez Cerén, won the last presidential elections in 2014, his administration endorsed a softer approach to the gang problem, emphasising social services and welfare. But the homicides on the streets and alleys of El Salvador continue to rise.

Examining the carnage between the Salvadoran government and the insidious maras offers a horrific vision of a future where economic inequality leads to a brutish Hobbesian death culture. It's when social classes become so polarised that logic dictates the have-nots need to be slaughtered; either by the elites using their henchmen and soldiers, or by the plebes. Is this the lesson the world should take away from El Salvador?

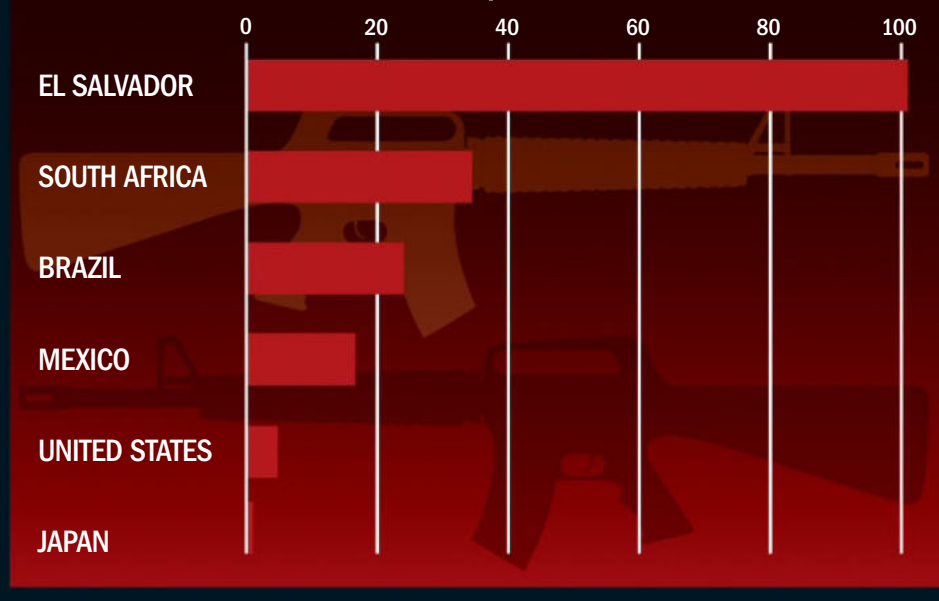
## CULLING THE GANGS

AS GANG CULTURE SPREADS, HOMICIDE RATES IN EL SALVADOR SKY ROCKET

Ever since the so-called 'gangland truce' between MS-13 and Barrio 18 collapsed in 2013, El Salvador has experienced an unprecedented crime wave. At least a

dozen homicides are committed every day of the year and the national murder rate is the world's highest. The cycle of death is constant and rising.

## MURDER RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION



### 2015

According to government statistics, 6,657 homicides were committed in 2015. There are currently an estimated 60-70,000 gang members in Central America.

### 2016

The government declares a state of emergency in several overcrowded prisons and launches a \$2 billion public works and education program to help communities overcome the mara culture.



# EGYPT'S STRUGGLE FOR CANAAN

In the Late Bronze Age, Egypt became the dominating superpower of the Middle East, but its rule over the southern Levant was challenged time and again. The two major battles of Megiddo and Kadesh would seal the fate of the region for centuries to come

WORDS MARCEL SERR

**T**he rise of the first civilisations in the Middle East in the Bronze Age was the beginning of organised warfare, accompanied by brilliant inventions that enhanced strategy, tactics, and, of course, weaponry. In the fourth millennium BCE, tin was added to copper in order to produce a harder alloy – bronze. In time this would come to mean that war was a much more serious, and deadly business.

Besides the invention of the composite bow towards the end of the third millennium BCE, one of the most significant military innovations of that time was the war chariot, which had possibly already been introduced by the Sumerians around 3000 BCE. By the 15th century BCE the Egyptians had developed the chariot to become the deadliest weapon of its time. However, production and maintenance required not only expensive training and horse

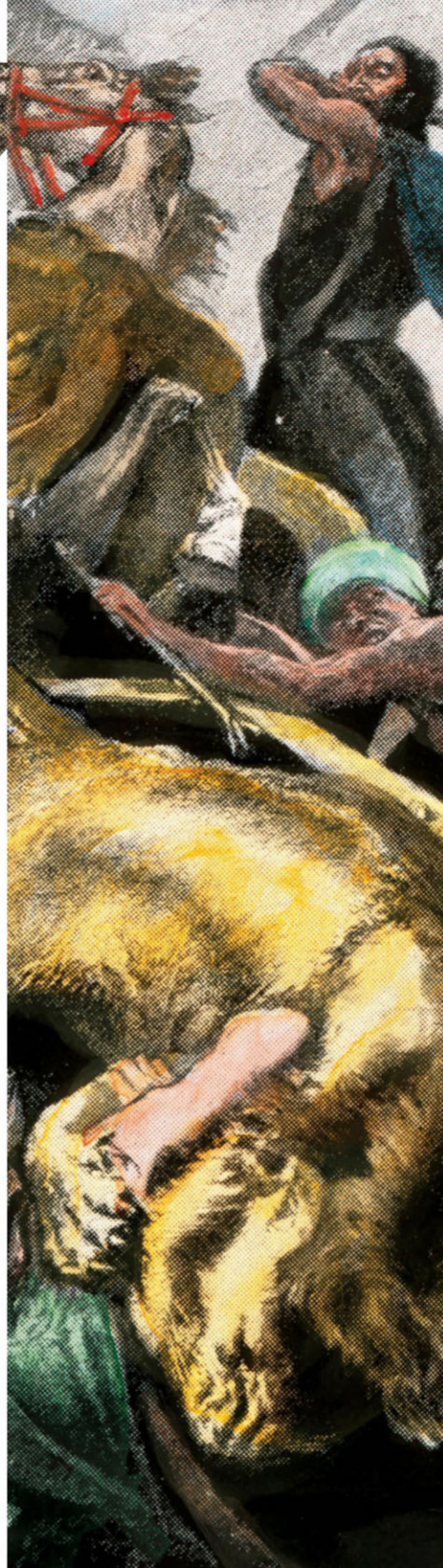
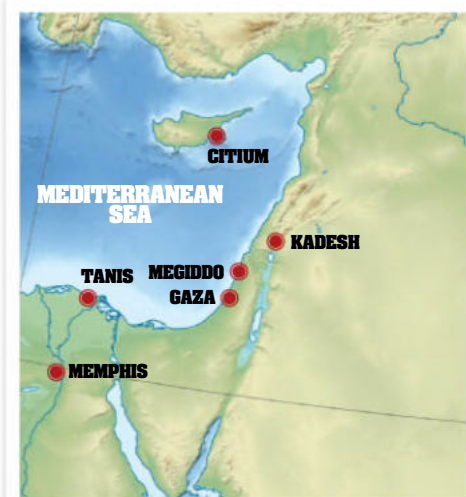
breeding, but also continued access to the woods that were needed for construction. For Egypt, this meant access to the cedars of the region now known as Lebanon. It was for this reason, among others, that the area became highly sought after by neighbouring powers.

Two centuries earlier, in the 17th century BCE, Egypt had been conquered by the Hyksos. For over 100 years these conquerors introduced new weapons – like the horse-drawn chariot, heavy bronze swords and the composite bow – to the Egyptian people. Ironically, with the help of these new arms, the Egyptians finally overwhelmed the Hyksos and founded the New Kingdom (c. 1570 BCE) that became the most powerful player in the Middle East, dominating the southern Levant.

## The rise of Thutmose III

When Pharaoh Thutmose II died in around 1479 BCE, his son, also named Thutmose was still too young to rule. This left Hatshepsut, the young man's stepmother, to reign in his stead and later declared herself pharaoh. While she did most of the ruling, Thutmose became head of the army. After Hatshepsut died, an alliance of Canaanites led by the ruler of Kadesh – a city in western Ancient Syria (now Israel) – rebelled against Egyptian rule. The rebels concentrated their forces at Megiddo (today's Wadi Ara, northern Israel) – a strategic city near what would be known as the Via Maris, the main trading artery to Mesopotamia.

Planning to surprise his enemy, Thutmose III quickly set his army in motion against the insurgents, before pausing his approach at Yehem. Here he had two choices to continue towards Megiddo, which was located behind the mountainous Carmel Ridge; he could either take the conventional routes around the ridge





**"THE EGYPTIANS FINALLY OVERWHELMED  
THE HYKSOS AND FOUNDED THE NEW  
KINGDOM THAT BECAME THE MOST  
POWERFUL PLAYER IN THE MIDDLE EAST"**

*While depicted in reliefs,  
there is no mention of  
lions fighting at the Battle  
of Kadesh, but Ramesses  
II is said to have fought  
with the animal's ferocity*

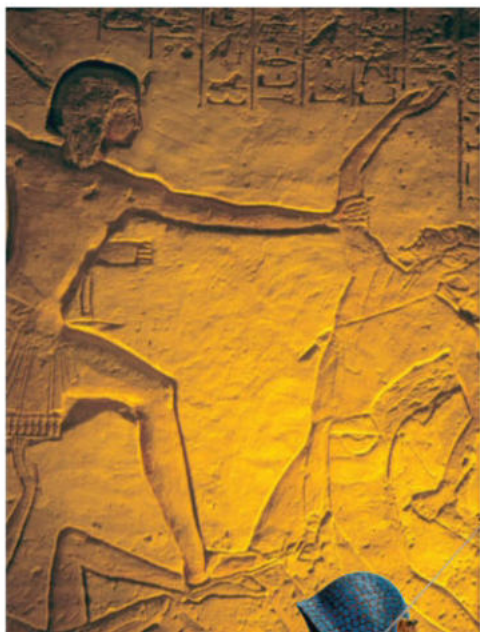




(to the north or south), or the narrow Musmus Pass leading directly to Megiddo. Whereas the first option would have given the Canaanites time to prepare for battle, the second would leave the Egyptian force exposed on a precarious trail. Thutmose, however, decided to take the risky, direct approach.

It turned out that the enemy had left the pass unguarded – a deadly mistake. Even worse, the anti-Egyptian alliance had split its forces, expecting Thutmose to attack either from north or south. When the Pharaoh and his men reached the end of the pass, the Egyptian army deployed in battle order. Thutmose arranged one infantry division in the north and one in the south, with chariots taking the centre.

**Below:** This carving shows the slaughter of the Hittites at Kadesh, despite the outcome of the battle being disputed



## “EGYPTIAN ACCOUNTS TELL OF RAMESSES STANDING IN HIS CHARIOT AND RUSHING INTO THE ENEMY LINES, GIVING NEW SPIRIT TO THE WAVERING EGYPTIANS AND TURNING THE TIDE OF THE BATTLE”

In the meantime, the Canaanite forces had to be redeployed quickly, which rattled their battle formation completely. The Egyptians began their attack with a massive chariot assault, dismantling the disorganised Canaanite lines. The insurgent army collapsed and the survivors escaped behind the walls of Megiddo, while Egyptian soldiers plundered their camp. Thutmose lost his chance to destroy his enemy completely and was forced to besiege Megiddo for seven months. This victory guaranteed Egyptian control over the southern Levant and pushed the Egyptian frontier to the Orontes River.

### The clash at Kadesh

In the following centuries, Egypt's rule over Canaan was volatile. The Egyptians lost the area several times because of rebellions and invasions, and then conquered it again. Soon, the Hittites, originating in Anatolia, contested rule of Canaan, bringing with them a more serious military threat than the Canaanite coalition back in the 15th century. In around 1274 BCE, Pharaoh Ramesses II (1279-13 BCE) confronted them in a major battle. He marched into Canaan with his army of 20,000 men and around 2,000 chariots.

His target was the city of Kadesh on the Orontes River. The target was to deal the Hittites a decisive blow to push them out of the region. Ramesses' force was split into four divisions and his personal guard.

The Hittite king, Muwatalli II, commanding over 18-19,000 men and some 3,500 chariots, took up position near Kadesh.

Despite having sophisticated reconnaissance units at their disposal, the Egyptians were deceived by men claiming to be Hittite deserters. They told Ramesses that the main body of the Hittite army was still far away. Taking the bait, Ramesses rushed forward to establish a post northwest of the city. When he reached Kadesh, however, the Hittites mounted a chariot attack in the rear of Ramesses' strike force, thereby cutting the Egyptian supply lines. Ramesses' limited forces were sitting in a trap. However, the Hittites did not take the opportunity to crush the Egyptians, but instead plundered their camp.

In the heat of battle, the Hittites failed to see the approach of the two other Egyptian divisions and a force of mercenaries. These troops attacked the Hittite flank and rear, relieving the Pharaoh's front. Ramesses took this chance and launched a bold counterattack.

Contemporary Egyptian accounts tell of Ramesses II standing in his chariot and rushing into the enemy lines, giving new spirit to the wavering Egyptians and turning the tide of the battle. The Hittite forces were sent fleeing into Kadesh, but the Pharaoh understood that his forces were not strong enough for an extended siege of the city.

Ultimately, the battle ended in a stalemate, with both parties negotiating a peace treaty – the earliest ever documented. Ramesses may have won the battle, but he failed to win the campaign against the Hittites. This left the strategic situation in Canaan more or less unchanged with the two empires still competing for overall control of the region.

Images: Alamy

**Mounted on his chariot, Thutmose III leads his men to victory against the Canaanites and their allies at Megiddo**





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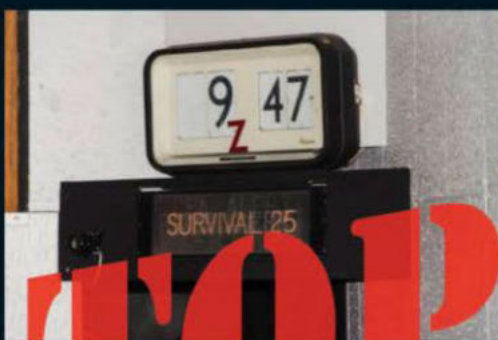
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*Australian soldier John Hannan, advances on a Japanese position armed with a Bren gun*





# AUSTRALIA'S THIN GREEN LINE

WORDS LEIGH NEVILLE

In 1942 Australia stood on the brink of invasion by the Japanese. Its last line of defence: citizen soldiers willing to lay their lives on the line in the hellish conditions of the Kokoda Trail

**I**n Australian history, Kokoda ranks only behind Gallipoli in terms of cultural importance and its impact on the Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) myth. The name is invoked in much the same manner as the battle at Anzac Cove as a kind of short-hand for a uniquely Australian version of the fabled 'Blitz spirit', a signifier of Aussie mateship against extreme adversary.

Despite this, the name of the campaign remains a bone of contention. Historians still argue Kokoda Trail versus Kokoda Track; the former has gained the upper hand in modern usage, while the latter was more commonly used by the Diggers themselves and in battalion records. According to the Australian War Memorial, keepers of Australian military history, both are equally correct.

In the popular imagination, the campaign stopped a Japanese invasion of mainland Australia, but historians have since discovered that the Japanese had decided against any such attempt. They concluded that they could never realistically occupy a landmass of such immense size. In 1942, however, the threat of invasion was very real for the average Australian. Japanese submarine attacks in Sydney Harbour and air raids against Darwin

only added to that fear. One Kokoda veteran later explained; "We were fighting for Australia, on Australian soil for the first time (Papua was an Australian protectorate at the time). It was important that we won because if we didn't win who knows what would have happened."

## A mountainous task

The battles that formed the Kokoda Campaign ran from mid-July to mid-November 1942; four months of close combat with a fanatical enemy in some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world. The Trail was a series of native tracks that crossed the Owen Stanley Mountain Range in what is now Papua New Guinea, from Owen's Corner near the capital of Port Moresby through the hot, wet jungle to the villages of Uberi and Ioribaiwa, where the path begins to rise dramatically. This first section of the Trail ends in what soon became known to many young soldiers as the 'Golden Stairs' – 4,000 treacherously slippery steps that are cut into the mountainside.

From the 'Golden Stairs' the gruelling ascent continues to the village of Efogi, some 1,500 meters above sea level, and on to Myola, which would become an Australian forward base, at 2,000 metres in altitude. With each step, the

temperature falls and the air becomes thinner. The Trail then peaks at what became known as Templeton's Crossing, some 2,500 metres above sea level, before beginning to finally descend across Eora Creek and through the tiny villages of Eora, Alola, Isurava, and Kokoda.

At the beginning of the Kokoda Campaign, there were only two under-strength Australian brigades stationed in Moresby; both comprised of inexperienced and poorly equipped teenage militia of the Australian Military Force (AMF). 39 Battalion and the Papuan Infantry Battalion of the AMF had been eventually dispatched across the Owen Stanleys to counter the possibility of a Japanese landing on the north-east coast. The Japanese beat them to it and landed their first troops around dusk on 21 July 1942 – they would be the first of an eventual landing force of more than 14,000.

The Japanese planned a two-pronged attack to capture Port Moresby – one across the Owen Stanleys to encircle the capital from the north, and the other as a direct amphibious assault against Moresby. The latter was aborted following the Battle for the Coral Sea, which broke up much of the invasion fleet. Instead, the Japanese relied upon advancing along the Kokoda Trail to Moresby.

**"IN THE POPULAR IMAGINATION, THE CAMPAIGN STOPPED A JAPANESE INVASION OF MAINLAND AUSTRALIA, BUT HISTORIANS HAVE SINCE DISCOVERED THAT THE JAPANESE HAD DECIDED AGAINST ANY SUCH ATTEMPT"**



*Although beautiful, the Kokoda Trail has some of the most inhospitable terrain on Earth*



It was while advancing along this route that the first battle of the campaign occurred, fittingly at the village of Kokoda itself. A small Australian force, from 39 Battalion of the AMF, had been airlifted to the village to conduct a reconnaissance toward Buna, the suspected site of the Japanese landings.

The Australian militia, led by Captain Sam Templeton, soon ran into the advancing Japanese forces of the South Seas Detachment and, severely outnumbered, carried out a number of harassing actions to impede the enemy advance. Templeton's men managed to ambush the first Japanese troops approaching the village at Oivi but the Australians were soon surrounded. Templeton himself set out to warn the main Australian force but was shot and killed crossing Eora Creek. This was soon to be the famous crossing, named in his honour.

Eventually, the surviving Diggers fell back to Kokoda, but the Japanese captured the village on 29 July. Just 79 men briefly recaptured Kokoda on 9 August, before being counterattacked and driven away by around 1,500 Japanese, retreating to the village of Deniki and then Isurava, the next village down the Trail. It was here that the Australians were ordered to dig in and await reinforcement. The 39 Battalion soldiers were soon outnumbered by as many as ten to one, but Isurava was well placed with good fields of fire over the surrounding valley.

The first regular Australian Imperial Force (AIF) units to enter the campaign were sent to relieve these beleaguered militia soldiers, but the first two battalions were forced to stop short at Myola, after running out of rations. The men of 39 Battalion were just about holding on in Isurava, their uniforms and boots

**"THERE WERE CLUMPS OF JAPS HERE AND THERE AND HE JUST MOWED THEM DOWN. HE JUST WENT STRAIGHT INTO 'EM AS IF BULLETS DIDN'T MEAN A THING..."**

literally falling apart and in dire need of food and ammunition. Their commander described them as; "worn out by strenuous fighting and exhausting movement, and weakened by lack of food and sleep and shelter." Despite this, they fought on. A veteran remembered; "We had to stay there – fight till death. And that was a bit horrifying. I thought, 'Well I won't see my family again. I won't see Australia again.' But I was prepared, like the rest of us, to stay there and fight to the finish."

On 26 August, the Japanese attacked Isurava again, pushing the beleaguered defenders to their limits. AIF troops were beginning to arrive to the fight by this time, but so were Japanese reinforcements. The bitter fighting would continue for three days as the Australians were forced to again withdraw having suffered heavy casualties, principally from a well-positioned Japanese mountain gun.

It was on 29 August that one member of the AIF, Private Bruce Kingsbury, made a desperate charge at an enemy position. One of his mates saw what happened; "He came forward with this Bren (light machine gun) and he just mowed them down and he was an inspiration to

everybody else around him. There were clumps of Japs here and there and he just mowed them down. He just went straight into 'em as if bullets didn't mean a thing... This Jap just appeared above the rock and fired one shot and vanished straight away. And I looked down and I saw Bruce and I grabbed him and took him up to Doc Duffy, to the RAP [Regimental Aid Post], but he was dead when he hit the ground". Kingsbury was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

After a second attack, during the night of 29 August, 39 Battalion and the reinforcements of the AIF slipped out of the village and withdrew to Eora Creek. Both the militia and AIF units had now suffered over 50 per cent casualties. At Templeton's Crossing, the starving men, described as 'gaunt scarecrows' by one medic, received their first hot meal in many weeks – a bully beef stew.

Relentless Japanese attacks, often supported by the mountain guns and mortars, saw the Australians forced to retreat even further south through their former base at Myola to the village of Efogi. Here they were reinforced by a fresh AIF battalion and the survivors of 39 Battalion were finally sent back to Moresby. Along the way, the Diggers continually harassed and slowed their enemy with ambushes and grim fighting withdrawals, making the Japanese pay for every inch of ground. The Japanese attacks continued and, despite reinforcement by two further battalions, the Diggers fell back to Ioribaiwa Ridge, less than 50 kilometres from Moresby itself..

### Fate plays its role

While the Kokoda Campaign was being waged in Papua, the US Marines had conducted a



*With vehicles being almost useless on the Trail, the Australians had to rely on airborne supplies or what they could carry themselves*



**1 28-29 JULY**

The Australian AMF first contact the advance elements of the Japanese South Seas Detachment. Despite being hugely outnumbered, the Australians manage to convince the Japanese that they were ten times their actual size.

**2 8-9 AUGUST**

The village of Kokoda is fought over, lost by the Australians and then abandoned by the Japanese only to be briefly recaptured by the Australians. The village falls to the Japanese again on 9 August.

**3 26-30 AUGUST**

The AMF defends Isurava against repeated Japanese attacks. Despite AIF reinforcement, the Australians are forced to withdraw. The commander of the AIF is captured and executed by the Japanese.

**4 31 AUGUST-5 SEPTEMBER**

Continual Japanese attacks see the beleaguered Australians retreat through Eora and their former base of operations at Myola. This is the most dangerous stage of the campaign and the closest the Japanese came to winning.

**5 6-9 SEPTEMBER**

With 39 Battalion dispatched back to Moresby, Efogi is reinforced by fresh AIF troops. Despite this they are almost encircled by the Japanese and narrowly manage to escape with heavy casualties.

**6 14-16 SEPTEMBER**

The survivors of the battle of Efogi prepare for the final defence of Port Moresby at Ioribaiwa Ridge. They fight the Japanese to a stalemate. Unable to sustain operations, the Japanese begin to pull back.

**PORT MORESBY****UBERI****IMITA****BRIGADE HILL****EFOGI****DENIKI****ISURAVA****KOKODA****LORIBALWA****AWALA****POPONDETTA****GONA****BUNA****7 12 OCTOBER**

AIF reinforcements advance after the retreating Japanese, making contact at Myola Ridge where the Japanese hold up the Australian advance for three days before slipping away under the cover of night.

**8 13-27 OCTOBER**

Australian forces attack prepared Japanese defences at Eora Creek and neighbouring village. After a costly battle the Japanese are defeated and conduct a fighting retreat from the Owen Stanley Range.

**9 2 NOVEMBER**

Australian forces enter the village of Kokoda without a shot being fired. Nonetheless it is both a morale boosting victory and a strategic one with a forward airfield now in Australian control.

**10 NOVEMBER 1942- JANUARY 1943**

Although the Kokoda Trail had been recaptured, three months of combat operations ensue until the last Japanese forces are destroyed or captured at their initial landing site of Buna on the north-east coast.

## TRAIL OF DEATH

KOKODA PROVED AS MUCH A RESILIENT ENEMY AS THE JAPANESE. EACH DAY THE AUSTRALIANS HAD TO FIGHT ANOTHER WAR: AGAINST THE TERRAIN ITSELF

Papua offered some of the hardest territory over which to fight a war. The region's tropical climate had an average annual rainfall of over 250 centimetres. These monsoonal downpours meant that a creek could become a raging river within an hour. In the mountains, which form the 'spine' of the country and the site for the famous battles at Templeton's Crossing, it was both cold and wet. At lower altitudes it was simply hot and wet.

The terrain of the Trail itself varied from treacherous ridge lines to valleys filled with Kunai grass and virtually impenetrable primary rainforest. It had a significant affect on the fighting. Visibility was very restricted meaning that most contacts with the enemy were at comparatively short range. Sub-machine guns and grenades were particularly favoured for this reason.

Any advance was slowed to a snail's pace as the Trail rapidly turned to sometimes knee-deep mud. The soldiers themselves were constantly wet and could never properly wash and dry their clothing or boots, contributing to dysentery and other illnesses. They were also constantly plagued by malaria-carrying mosquitos. In short it was, as once famously described by a Digger, "a bastard of a place".

*Right: Papuan native porters evacuating a seriously wounded Australian soldier along the Kokoda Trail. Note the incline, mud and oppressive jungle*

**"VISIBILITY WAS VERY RESTRICTED MEANING THAT MOST CONTACTS WITH THE ENEMY WERE AT COMPARATIVELY SHORT RANGE. SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND GRENADES WERE PARTICULARLY FAVOURED FOR THIS REASON"**



Illustration: Rebekka Hearl



massive amphibious landing at Guadalcanal. If the Americans were able to capture the airstrip, they would have a stepping stone against the chain of Japanese held islands in the Pacific. For the Japanese, the advance against the Australians in Papua was taking too long against stiff resistance and commanders were nervous about over-committing to the capture of Moresby, especially while the US Marines fought back a major Japanese counter-attack on Guadalcanal. The enemy forces had finite resources (they had set out from Buna along the Trail with enough rations and water for only 12 days) and, with an already dangerously over-extended supply train, the decision was made to focus on defeating the Marine landings.

Late in September, the Japanese were forced to postpone their ambitions toward Port Moresby and instead were forced to conduct a withdrawal themselves, north along the Trail back to the village of Eora. As no Japanese term existed for 'retreat', the order instead called for an 'advance to the rear'. The delaying tactics employed by the Australians had paid off, slowing their enemy's advance until it was no longer a viable option. The Diggers had turned the tide – now they were the attackers.

Fresh AIF troops advanced back up the Trail, reaching Menari without contacting the enemy. On 12 October, the advancing Australians made contact with the retreating Japanese at

the battle of Myola Ridge, eventually flanking three Japanese detachments arrayed across the Trail.

The Australian troops pushed forward steadily, sending out reconnaissance parties to scout out the Japanese defences. As one veteran described it: "I'll never forget the first time I was forward scout... You were very lucky to survive, so you had a certain time [working as a scout], then somebody else took over, see. And you couldn't do anything, you only walked up the track. You were the bloke they were going to shoot at. Then you'd know there were Japs there."

The withdrawing Japanese 144 Regiment had been ordered to retreat to Eora Creek and construct defensive positions on the eastern slopes of the Track, south of Eora. These overlooked the natural barrier of the creek. The Japanese infantry were well supported by their own artillery, positioned to fire down the incline upon advancing Australian forces at a highly lethal angle.

Despite their well-sited positions and on-call artillery support, the Japanese defenders also faced a number of difficult challenges of their own. Their commander had been recently replaced as he was required to attend a promotion exam back in Japan, precisely when the now demoralised troops needed continuity and a steady hand. They were also

*A Papuan orderly helps a wounded Australian soldier on Christmas Day, 1942*



*These shells were carried the entire length of the Trail by the Japanese*

**"A WEEK-LONG BATTLE ENSUED AT TEMPLETON'S CROSSING AND INTO EORA ITSELF. MORE THAN 50 DIGGERS WERE KILLED IN ACTION AND OVER 130 WERE WOUNDED DURING THIS TENACIOUS CLASH"**

## THE 'CHOCOS' GO TO WAR

**A CONSCRIPT ARMY OF AUSTRALIAN MILITIA WAS DISPATCHED TO STOP THE JAPANESE ADVANCE – THE FAMOUS 'CHOCOS' OF THE AMF**

As a member of the Commonwealth, and the second nation to follow Great Britain in declaring war against Germany in 1939, Australia had dispatched the majority of its small volunteer army,

known as the AIF or Australian Imperial Force, overseas in 1940-41.

While the AIF famously fought in Greece and North Africa, it was left largely to the conscripted

militia, more officially known as the Australian Military Force (AMF), to defend the Australian territory and possessions.

The AMF was at the time composed of some 130,000 conscripts, most with little to no military experience. Initially, these men were, by law, to be used strictly for the defence of Australia and could not be dispatched overseas like the AIF. In reaction to Japan's lightning fast advance through Papua and with a distinct lack of regular troops available, the first AMF were sent to defend what was, at the time, officially Australian soil.

At best, these militia soldiers were given a month's worth of rudimentary training before they were sent to the jungles of Papua. The men averaged 18 years of age and were noticeably poorly equipped to face the Japanese. They were disparagingly called 'Chocos' by the regular AIF, arguing that the 'chocolate soldiers' of the AMF would melt in the sun (or in the heat of battle).

Others jokingly called them 'Koalas' after the famous native Australian marsupial – not to be exported or shot at! Remarkably, the term 'Choco' or 'Choc' remained within Australian military vernacular through Vietnam and is even in use today to denote Reserve soldiers.

*Members of the 39th Battalion on parade after weeks of intense fighting*







*Australian gunners pose beside a captured Japanese artillery piece*

perilously low on rations; Australian troops later reported that there was evidence that many of the Japanese soldiers had been subsisting on grass, tree bark and plant roots. Ammunition was also dwindling.

A week-long battle ensued at Templeton's Crossing and into Eora itself. More than 50 Diggers were killed in action and over 130 were wounded during this tenacious clash. With ammunition, rations and rested troops, the Australians eventually overcame but not without heavy losses. A platoon commander remembered being fired upon by the Japanese mountain guns: "I had to stay at one stage above Eora Creek and the gun was firing... Every time he fired it, he fired it down the track and it hit somebody... That was probably the biggest test of ordinary personal courage that I ever had to undergo. And I don't want to undergo it again."

## **"DESPITE NOT CONTACTING A SINGLE ENEMY, THE AMERICAN UNIT TOOK AN ASTOUNDING 42 DAYS TO CROSS THE OWEN STANLEYS"**

The enemy were now in full retreat, pulling back and leaving Kokoda undefended. A Digger wrote that the capture of the village of Kokoda on 2 November, nonetheless, was a significant morale boost for the Australians: "It meant so much. The aerodrome was ours, and that meant we would get better tucker [food] and comforts would come in." Disturbingly, the Japanese left their badly wounded behind: "We gave them grenades and we gave them instructions: 'When the enemy comes, you must throw the first grenade at the enemy and kill yourselves with the second grenade.' And then we left them there and we crossed the river. This is one of my worst memories of the war," recalled one Japanese officer.

### **The end of the beginning?**

The Diggers had won the battle of the Kokoda Track, but three months of further brutal

combat awaited them as they fought the remnants of the South Seas Detachment. In November, the Diggers, accompanied by American Army units, reached Buna and Gona on the north-east coast, the site of the original Japanese landings. In fact, despite American General Douglas MacArthur's protestations, the arrival of the first American unit in Papua forced him to belatedly recognise the resilience of the Australians and the AMF in particular. MacArthur had been a vocal critic of the Australians for much of the campaign.

An infantry battalion from the American 126th Regiment had arrived and were dispatched up a parallel trail known as the Kapa Kapa Trail. Despite not contacting a single enemy, the American unit took an astounding 42 days to cross the Owen Stanleys and the exhausted men – ridden with dysentery and malaria like the Australian forces – were classed as combat ineffective for a number of months afterward.

The Kokoda Campaign had been a war against the effects of disease and malnourishment as much as against the Imperial Japanese Army. A minimum of ten per



cent of a unit's fighting strength was typically stricken with jungle diseases at any one time. Chief among these was dysentery caused by the appalling conditions and diet along with a lack of medical supplies to treat the condition.

Casualties from the fighting and from jungle disease and malnutrition on both sides were often evacuated by native porters. Papuans working for the Australians were known affectionately, in the admittedly racist language of the time, as the 'Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels'. The Australian Air Force was supposed to fly casualties out from Myola but refused to do so, arguing it placed their aircraft at too great a risk. Instead, the wounded were carried out by the Papuans. The Japanese forces treated the Papuan natives rather more brutally and as little more than slave labour – many died or were executed after they themselves fell ill through overwork.

Resupply was the other key factor affecting combat performance in the jungles of Papua. For the Australians, the closest resupply was anywhere up to 160 kilometres away in Moresby. Everything had to be carried in on the backs of Diggers, Papuan porters and pack animals or dropped from the air, a very unreliable procedure that saw many pallets disappear into the jungle. Food and ammunition were often scarce and both had to be conserved where possible. The author's own grandfather, then Lance Corporal Edward Farrelly, fought on the Track, and recalls routinely having less than two full magazines for his Thompson sub-machine gun. The Diggers, like soldiers in any war, were also often saddled with gear that wasn't fit for the unique environment they found themselves in.

For example, Farrelly recalls carrying a .55 Boys anti-tank rifle, only a trifling 16 kilograms

(unloaded) in the sweltering scrub. It was useless due to the distinct lack of Japanese armour on the Track, something even a cursory examination of a map would have identified – it was hardly tank country. Apparently that particular Boys disappeared down a steep gully in an unfortunate 'accident'. Other weapons, like the Vickers medium machine gun that could have been decisive in the early battles on the Track, were inexplicably ordered to be left behind as they were thought to be too heavy to manoeuvre in the dense terrain.

The fighting was tough and often at close range with the Japanese typically preferring death rather than face capture and dishonour. An Australian veteran remembered the actions of one Japanese officer: "One of the [most] extraordinary sights I've ever seen, [was] when we encircled these Japs so we could capture the position and kill them all... A Japanese officer raced out with his sword, drawn sword, samurai sword, and one of our lieutenants grappled with him, and his weapon jammed.

"Just luck of the game, you know, it happens in every battle I suppose. And they grappled together and any rate, someone else came up, one of our chaps, and shot this Japanese who

**"OTHER WEAPONS, LIKE THE VICKERS MEDIUM MACHINE GUN THAT COULD HAVE BEEN DECISIVE IN THE EARLY BATTLES ON THE TRACK, WERE INEXPLICABLY ORDERED TO BE LEFT BEHIND"**



Soldiers of the 7th Division use horses to drag a 25 pounder gun into position over the Owen Stanley Ridge



## "THEY ARE BEAUTS AT GETTING UP THE COCONUT TREES AND SNIPING. THEY SEEM TO BE EVERYWHERE, AND I'LL BE BLOWED IF I CAN SEE THEM"

had so gallantly and bravely raced towards us waving his sword, you know, extraordinary sight, you wouldn't think you would see it in this 1942 war would you?"

In common with the later island-hopping campaigns in the Pacific, Kokoda was an exceptionally vicious operation in which no quarter was given by either side. Tales of Japanese atrocities only fuelled the 'shoot first, ask questions later' nature of the fight, where the taking of prisoners was an unusual occurrence. The Japanese also proved a skilful opponent, devising tactics to match the unique terrain. Another Digger wrote: "They are beaubs at getting up the coconut trees and sniping. They seem to be everywhere, and I'll be blown

if I can see them. I don't know how they get up those coconut trees. I can't climb them stripped, yet they can take a machine gun up one."

Despite this ferocious opposition, disease, the lack of food and water and the jungle itself, the Australians were triumphant. Kokoda became the first time the Japanese were soundly defeated and, it was felt at the time by a grateful nation, the end of the spectre of invasion. General Sir William Slim commented after the war: "It was the Australians... who broke the spell of Japanese invincibility on land and inflicted on that arrogant army its first defeat."

Japanese casualties are unknown but are believed to number in the thousands. Over 1,600 Australian servicemen were wounded in action on the Trail, and 625 made the ultimate sacrifice in combat. They lost many more to malaria, dysentery and dengue fever. The former CO of the famous 39th Battalion, the late Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Honner, summed up the feelings of many when he said: "They died so young. They missed so much. They gave up so much; their dreams; their loved ones; they laid down their lives so that their friends might live. Greater love hath no man than this."



*It is said that the native Papuans never left a wounded man behind, even in heavy combat*



*Left: Members of D Company, 39th Battalion, return to base camp after a battle at Isurava*



*These damp, humid conditions were the perfect breeding ground for tropical diseases*

## UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

THE SMALL ARMS EACH SIDE WIELDED IN THE CRAMPED JUNGLE CONDITIONS

### JAPANESE ARMS

#### TYPE 38 RIFLE

**CLIP CAPACITY: 5 RATE OF FIRE: 15 RPM**

Compared to most Japanese small arms, the bolt action Type 38 was a decent service rifle. Its 6.5mm round produced less recoil and muzzle flash than the standard Australian .303.



#### TYPE 92 MEDIUM MACHINE GUN

**CLIP CAPACITY: 30 RATE OF FIRE: 450 RPM**

The Japanese medium machine gun, the Type 92 was an unusual design fed from 30 round stripper clips. Diggers nicknamed it the Woodpecker thanks to its slow and steady rate of fire.



### AUSTRALIAN ARMS

#### BREN LIGHT MACHINE GUN

**CLIP CAPACITY: 30 RATE OF FIRE: 500 RPM**

The Bren light machine gun was accurate, comparatively light, and superbly reliable. The British design fired a .303 round (the same calibre as the Enfield rifle) from a top-mounted 30 round magazine.



#### OWEN MACHINE CARBINE

**CLIP CAPACITY: 33 RATE OF FIRE: 700 RPM**

The Owen sub-machine gun was an Australian designed replacement for the American Thompson. It first saw action in the closing stages of the Kokoda campaign where its light weight was prized.





# BOOK REVIEWS

Our pick of the newest military history titles waiting for you on the shelves

## THE OXFORD ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

**Author:** Hew Strachan and others  
**Publisher:** Oxford University Press  
**Price:** £18.99 **Released:** Out Now

AN ORIGINAL HISTORY OF THE WAR THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

The horrors of World War I are well known, etched into the imagination through a myriad of books, films and plays. Refreshingly, this book does not simply revisit the commonly known timeline; it delves into its origins, the aims of its participants and the world they left behind.

Using maps to delineate the borders of Europe and Africa before and after the war, Strachan colourfully displays how dramatically this conflict altered the very shape of nations as empires faded. While peace descended elsewhere following the Armistice, violence continued to rage throughout the shattered remnants of the Habsburg, Romanov and Ottoman Empires.

Propaganda issued during the war helps to unearth the feelings and fears of citizens and leaders alike, while intimate photographs from the front line illustrate life in the trenches in raw detail.

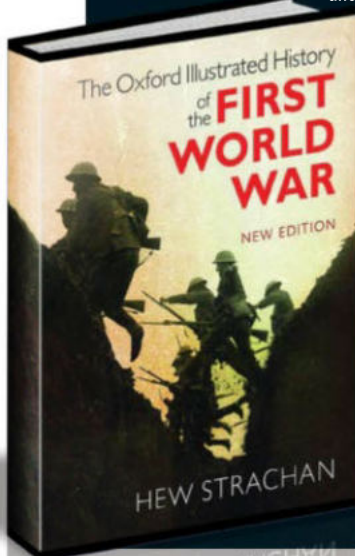
Expert contributors add their individual insights, examining subjects such as the economic and military mobilisations behind the Entente and Central powers.

However, perhaps the most intriguing element of a war that left no life untouched was the struggle each belligerent encountered when attempting to express themselves in its aftermath.

War literature did eventually follow, Ernst Jünger's *Storm Of Steel* amongst the most famous. But it wasn't until the late-1920s that the

likes of Hemingway and Sassoon emerged, alongside the release of classic films such as *All Quiet On The Western Front* and RC Sheriff's play *Journey's End*.

This elegant, superbly compiled book concludes by studying how World War II altered the recollection of its predecessor, before looking at how we remember the fallen soldiers today.



## A HISTORY OF THE ROYAL NAVY THE SEVEN YEARS WAR

**Writer:** Martin Robson **Publisher:** IB Tauris **Price:** £16.59 **Released:** Out now

HOW THE ROYAL NAVY WAS DEVELOPED INTO AN IRRESISTIBLE WEAPON IN BRITAIN'S SUCCESSFUL BID TO BUILD A GLOBAL EMPIRE

This is one of 14 instalments in the National Museum of the Royal Navy's series documenting the Senior Service's history down the centuries, from the age of sail through to the nuclear era. As its title suggests, this particular part of that series takes a look at a very narrow corridor of time – the seven years between 1756 and 1763 – and the conflict that dominated it.

The Seven Years' War, as it rather unimaginatively got branded, in many ways shaped the world that we live in today. Fought ostensibly between France, Austria, Saxony, Sweden and Russia on one side, and Prussia, Hanover and Britain on the other, what started off as a European punch up, soon escalated into the first global conflict.

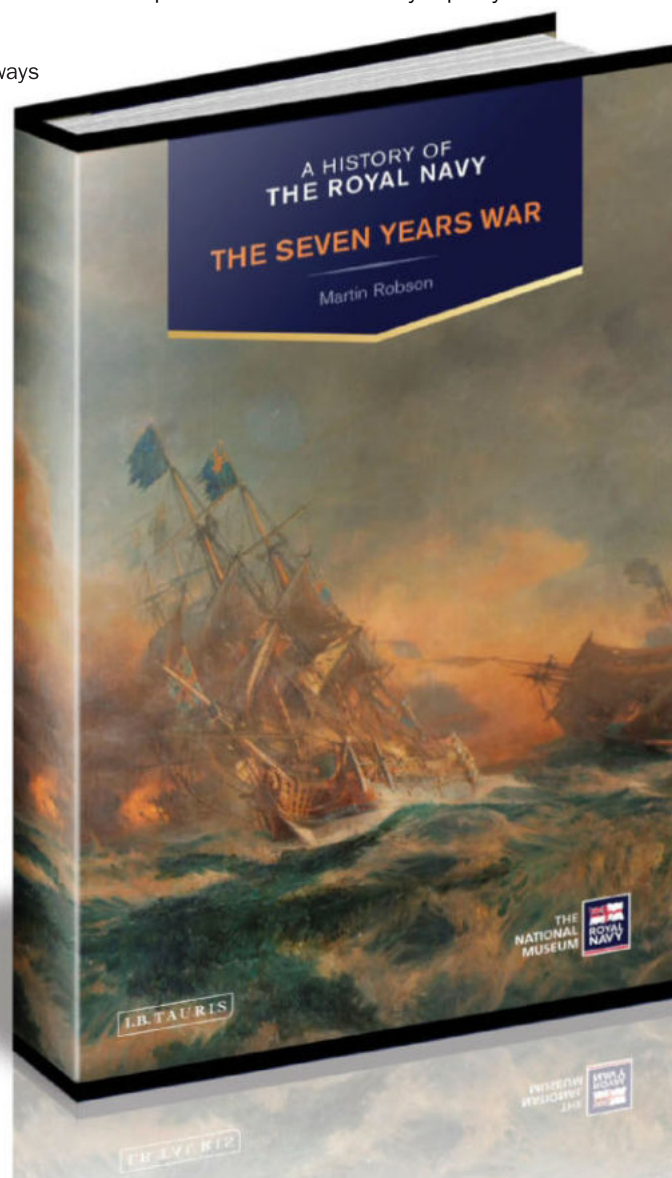
Although it had been sparked by the Austrians trying to win back land it had previously lost to Prussia in present-day Poland, it soon became a colossal battle between Britain and France for control of both India and North America. The victor was always going to be the one who owned the ocean's highways and this struggle is what's at the heart of author Martin Robson's dramatic, accessible introduction to the Royal Navy's role in this.

In doing so, Robson demonstrates how greater decisiveness both politically and militarily gave Britain the edge in the war on the waves.

By the time the last British cannonball had taken down its final

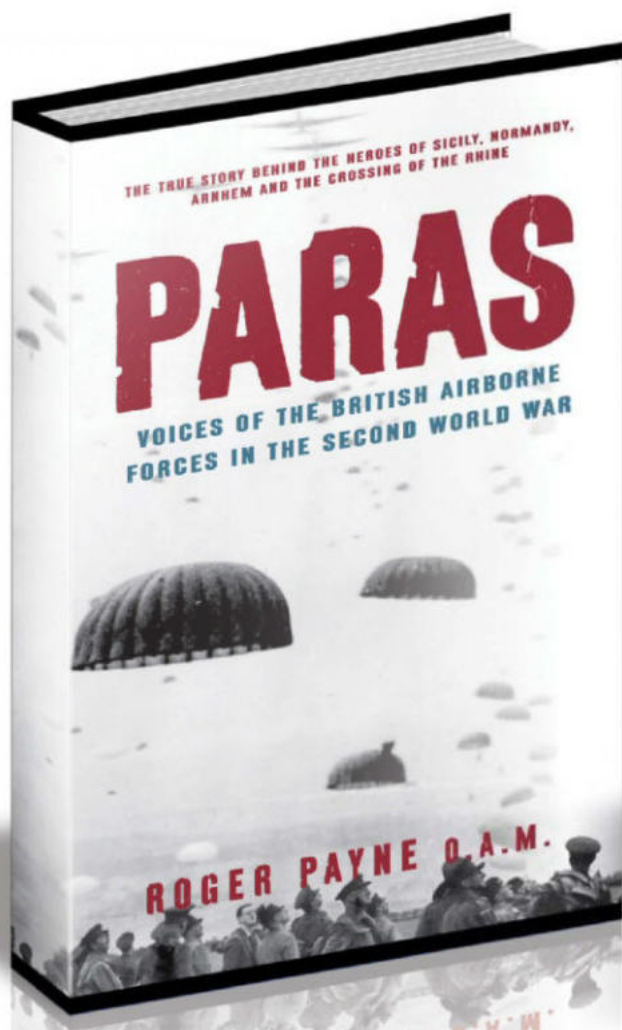
French mast, Louis XV's defeated forces were obliged to hand over Canada and Florida, as well as colonial possessions in the Caribbean, West Africa and South East Asia to Britain.

The foundations of the British Empire had been laid and the Royal Navy was on its way to becoming its most powerful weapon. A vital chapter in British naval history expertly told.



**"IT SOON BECAME A COLOSSAL BATTLE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND FRANCE FOR CONTROL"**





# PARAS VOICES OF THE BRITISH AIRBORNE FORCES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

**Writer:** Roger Payne OAM **Publisher:** Amberley Publishing

**Price:** £11.99 **Released:** Out now

THE LEGENDARY RED DEVILS' BIRTH AND EARLY DAYS GETS A SOCIAL HISTORY MAKEOVER WITH REFRESHING RESULTS

Although parachuting into combat is still seen as a valid deployment method by the British army, its Parachute Regiment hasn't actually entered a conflict zone this way since the Suez Crisis of 1956. Reading Roger Payne's book, *Paras*, which explores the history of Britain's two airborne divisions (the 1st and 6th) during World War II, it's not difficult to see why.

Leaping from a plane onto a battlefield seems like a suicidal tactic, and yet in an age before combat helicopters, it was deemed a necessary one to win a war. Indeed, it's possible D-Day might have failed had vital inland targets not been grabbed by the 6th Airborne Division the night before the invasion. Casualties, though, were huge. By the time the 6th limped back to England it had lost about half of its 10,000 men.

The 1st Division fared even worse. Montgomery's disastrous Operation

Market Garden, launched in September 1944, saw it encircled at Arnhem, Holland, 64 miles behind German lines. After nine days of fighting, it was left so badly mauled that it never regained its full strength, and was disbanded only a year later.

Payne's highly readable book takes us through all of this and much more – from the formation of the Paras in 1940, through selection, training, early operations in North Africa and Italy before moving onto the more famous engagements in Western Europe. What makes it particularly refreshing is that he tells this story through a patchwork of voices belonging to the men who jumped and fought. The result is a compelling read that does much to get beyond the almost mythic image of the Para, to reveal ordinary flesh and blood men who were called upon to perform acts of extraordinary courage.

# DREAMS OF A GREAT SMALL NATION

**Author:** Kevin J McNamara **Publisher:** Public Affairs International Ltd **Price:** £13 **Released:** Out Now

HOW A BAND OF CZECHS AND SLOVAK FIGHTERS HELPED DESTROY AN EMPIRE, BEFORE ALMOST KILLING OFF THE NEWLY BORN SOVIET UNION

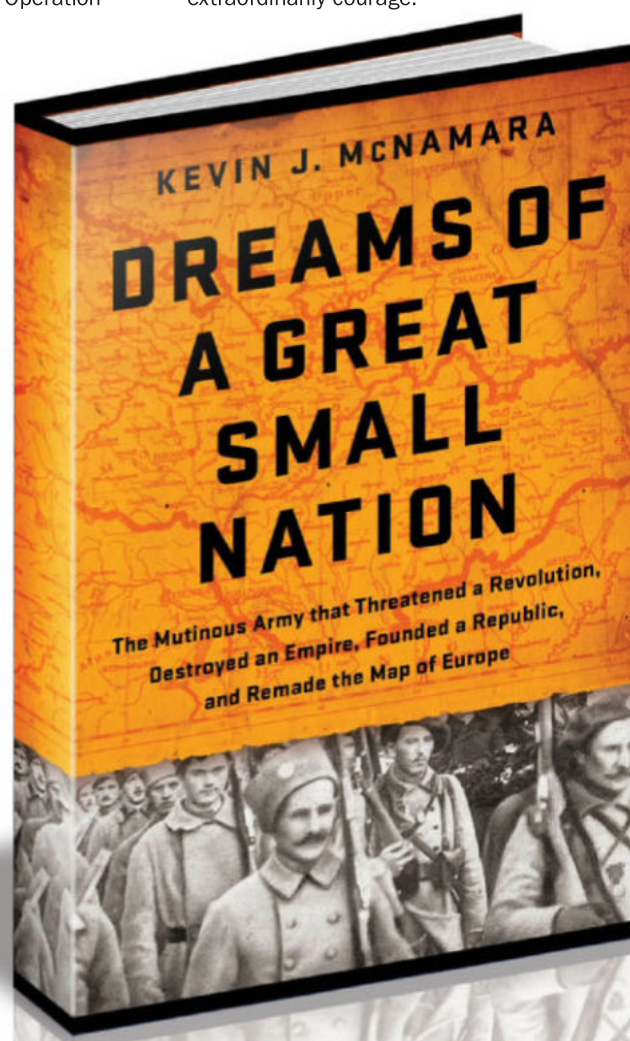
The full title of this book is *Dreams Of A Great Small Nation – The Mutinous Army That Threatened A Revolution, Destroyed An Empire, Founded A Republic And Remade The Map Of Europe*. It's a bold sell, but this incredible story lives up to its billing. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about it, though, is that it's a fable that's remained largely untold. Until now.

Set against the backdrop of WWI, this enthralling book tells the fate of thousands of Czech and Slovak soldiers press-ganged into service by the Austro-Hungarian Empire to fight Russia. These men, inspired by Czech independence campaigner Tomáš Masaryk, then deserted on mass to join the Tsar's army in order to fight their former overlords.

In 1917, the Tsar was toppled by Lenin, so Masaryk convinced the Allies that,

in return for a Czech-Slovak state, the Tsar's now independent Czech Legion would join their fight on the Western Front. But how would they get the force to France? An epic journey then followed as the Legion took to the Trans-Siberian Railway and made for Vladivostok.

Somewhere in Siberia it was deemed a sufficient enough threat to the Soviet leadership that Trotsky ordered its destruction. Thousands of miles from home, in a now-hostile country, the Czech Legion should have been overcome. Instead, egged on by the Allies and fuelled by patriotic ambition, the troops took the Red Army on, capturing almost the entire railway, many cities along its route, and nearly toppling the Bolshevik regime in the process. A captivating tale, brilliantly told.





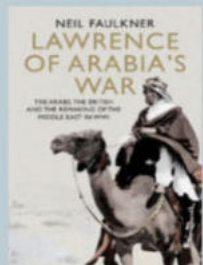
## ALL ABOUT HISTORY RECOMMENDED READING



### BRITISH POSTERS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In the absence of the Internet, television and in the dawn of radio, posters were the number one way to sell your product and hammer your point home. Page after page, John

Christopher has left his compilation of full colour posters portraying beckoning sergeants, appeals to patriotic pride and the guilt of abandoning friends to the 'Hun' do the talking.



### LAWRENCE OF ARABIA'S WAR

The story of TE Lawrence and the Arab Revolt is one of the most famous of WWI. There have been many books focused on his remarkable career but few that have combined both Lawrence and the Middle Eastern

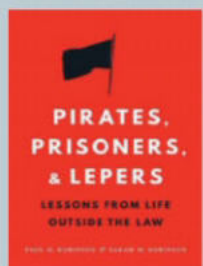
conflict as a whole in equal measure. Faulkner's work is an excellent introduction to the campaigns that shaped today's conflict in the Middle East and the extraordinary man who was caught up in it.



### THE FRENCH SQUADRONS: A TRUE STORY OF LOVE AND WAR

A 19-year-old woman from northwest England, Barbara Harper-Nelson's life was changed forever after a chance meeting with a 22-year-old French airman

by the name of Francis Usai. When Usai was called away to the continent to fight for the Allies, the two decided to keep in touch via a series of poignant love letters. *The French Squadrons* book is a combination of the original correspondence and Harper-Nelson's diaries from 1944-46 and the result is a touching and fascinating story.



### PIRATES, PRISONERS AND LEPERS: LESSONS FROM LIFE OUTSIDE THE LAW

History is defined by its rebels and outcasts. At least, that is the message of *Pirates, Prisoners, And Lepers*. In this exploration

of humanity, Paul H Robinson and Sarah M Robinson discuss the importance of social order through the survival of individuals completely separated from law and civilisation. Would we still retain our morals and cooperate to survive if we are left to our own devices?

# PUMPKIN FLOWERS

**Writer:** Matti Friedman **Publisher:** Biteback Publishing

**Price:** £12.99 **Released:** Out Now

THE MOVING TALE OF A WAR THAT CHANGED THE MIDDLE EAST FOREVER

"There is no room for innocence here." The words of Avi, a thoughtful young Israeli soldier echo throughout this magnificent book, a Middle-Eastern *Anthem For Doomed Youth*.

From the very first pages Friedman, himself a soldier among the many stationed on the Pumpkin (a rectangular hill on the Israeli-Lebanon border), beautifully captures war's ability to trample the flower of innocence.

Split into four parts, Friedman eloquently conveys the individual tragedies of the soldiers who fought to hold the hilltop in the mid-1990s.

The drudgery of army routine is simultaneously captured in its most depressing form, yet fascinatingly revealed as a potent weapon in transforming high school graduates into killing machines.

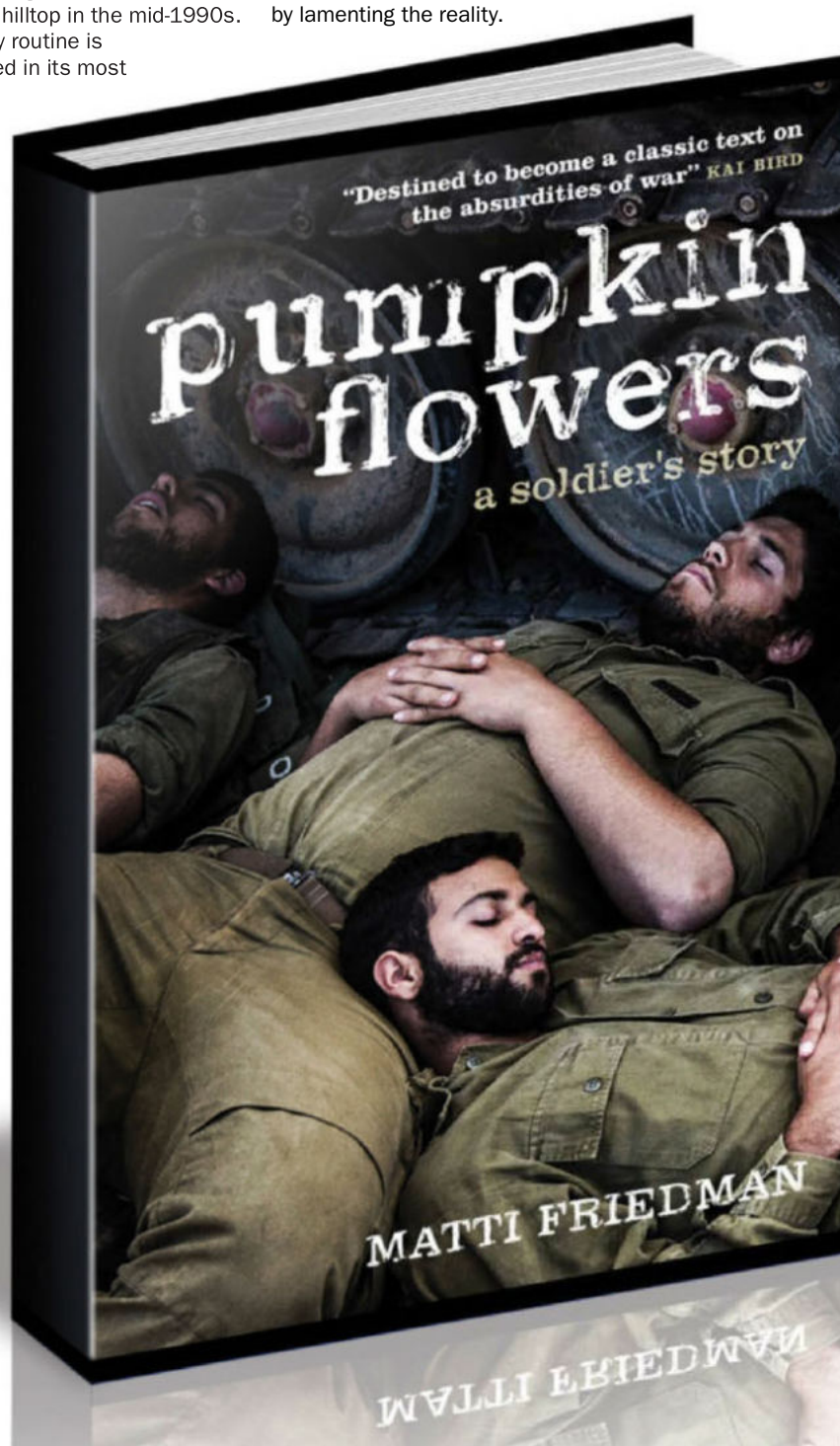
Numerous musical references powerfully emphasise this gradual loss of what it is to be a child. Positioning this defining period between Guns and Roses' 'Appetite For Destruction' and Nirvana's iconic 'Nevermind' reinforces the image of young men dying in trenches instead of pursuing the teenage love of music.

Much like Avi, Friedman is unafraid to examine the war's true meaning. In his mind, the Pumpkin asks, "What are you doing here?"

Ironically, it was the self-inflicted wound of two Israeli helicopters colliding en route to this bloodied outpost that shook the rest of Israel into asking the same question.

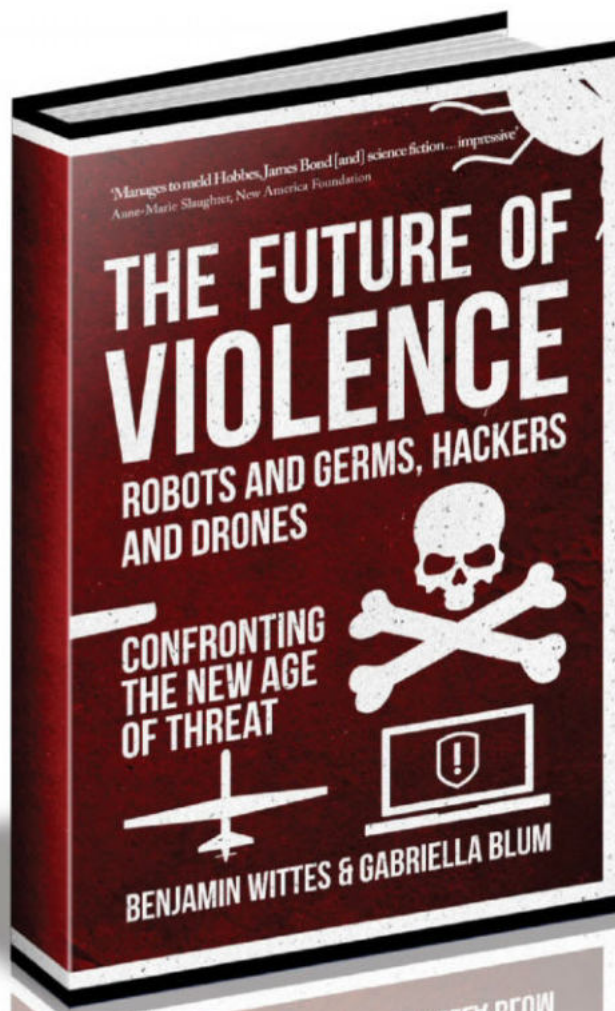
The loss of 73 young men enraged the mothers of Israel, an anger which ultimately led to Israel's withdrawal from the 'secure zone' surrounding the Pumpkin in May 2000.

It was supposed to herald peace, the 'flowers' (Israeli code for casualties) and 'oleanders' (dead) suffered for a cause. Friedman concludes by lamenting the reality.



**"NUMEROUS REFERENCES POWERFULLY EMPHASISE THIS GRADUAL LOSS OF WHAT IT IS TO BE A CHILD"**





**"THE INTERNET ADDS A FURTHER LAYER OF COMPLEXITY DUE TO THE ANONYMITY THAT IT AFFORDS ATTACKERS"**

# THE FUTURE OF VIOLENCE

**Author:** Benjamin Wittes and Gabriella Blum **Publisher:** Amberley  
**Price:** £16.99 **Released:** Out Now

AN ENLIGHTENING YET TERRIFYING LOOK AT THE POWER TECHNOLOGY HAS GIVEN US

With great power, comes great responsibility. The words of Lincoln ring true for any civilized head of state.

But what happens when power once restricted to national leaders finds itself in the hands of the individual? How does the world guard against potentially thousands of reckless, even evil, citizens? This is one of the many questions this book seeks to answer.

We now live in a world of 'many-to-many threats', making everyone simultaneously more powerful and more vulnerable than ever before. As mass-empowerment technologies such as robotics and nanotechnology become cheaper to develop, they inevitably become more prevalent; the skills needed to use them become common.

A robotic spider equipped to inject a lethal toxin; a student recreating

smallpox; even a nanobot capable of targeting and destroying human cells; all are now dangerous possibilities.

The internet adds a further layer of complexity due to the anonymity that it affords potential attackers. How can a state recognise, let alone mitigate, an attack launched at any time, from anywhere, by anyone? Distance and borders are no longer a defence.

The authors do offer a host of possible solutions for both domestic and international governance, and regularly counter their pessimism by reminding us of the potential benefits of ever-evolving technology.

It is sobering to think that if one of the nightmare scenarios they imagine becomes a reality the results will be horrific. Never mind Big Brother, it is the little brothers we should worry about.

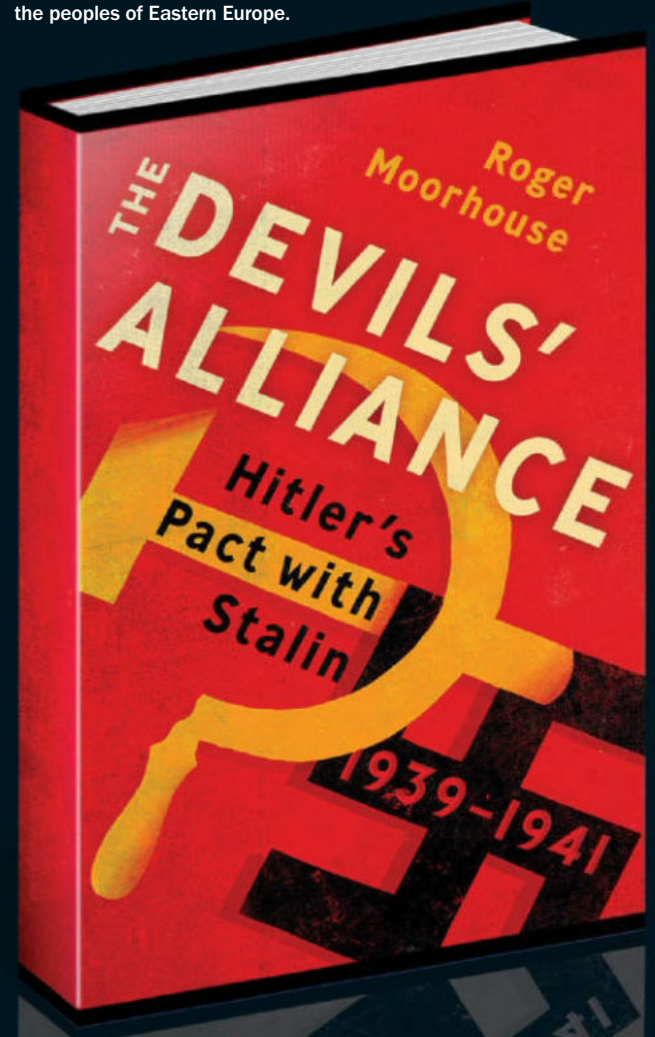
# THE DEVILS' ALLIANCE: HITLER'S PACT WITH STALIN 1939-1941

**Author:** Roger Moorhouse  
**Publisher:** Penguin Random House  
**Price:** £9.99 (Paperback) **Released:** Out Now

DISCOVER HOW TWO OF THE MOST EVIL MEN IN HISTORY BRIEFLY JOINED FORCES IN AN UNHOLY PARTNERSHIP THAT CONDEMNED THE WORLD INTO TOTAL WAR

Joseph Stalin's hard fought, but ultimately total, victory against Adolf Hitler is arguably the most crucial factor that decided the course of World War II. Between 1941-45 the Soviet Union lost perhaps up to 26 million of its citizens in the 'Great Patriotic War' against the Third Reich. It was a fight to the death between two competing ideologies and cultures but what is less well known is that Hitler and Stalin formed an unlikely alliance between 1939-41 that also had a direct bearing on the course of the war.

In August 1939 the two leaders signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact, where it was agreed that Poland would be divided between them. This led to the outbreak of war the following month, with dire consequences for the Poles and the rest of the world. In *The Devil's Alliance*, Roger Moorhouse has written a highly readable account of this often forgotten and unlikely story when Fascism united with Communism. Moorhouse has used a wide range of primary sources to explain the violent politics of the period and the resulting atrocities that were committed by both sides against the peoples of Eastern Europe.







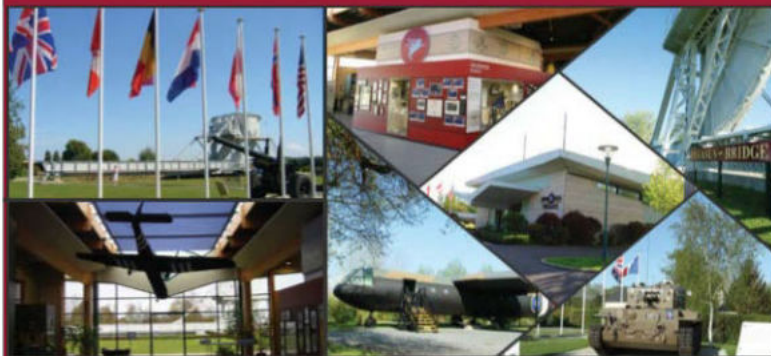
**Dedicated to the men of 6<sup>th</sup> British Airborne Division,  
the first liberators to arrive in Normandy on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944.**

Archive films, a guided visit and many interesting and authentic objects enable visitors to relive this momentous time.

The original Pegasus Bridge is on display in the park of the museum along with a full-size copy of a wartime Horsa glider.

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ON  
SALE  
16 June

# SOMME 1916-2016



Right: This silver badge pinpointed a more exact location for the Battle of Bosworth and personally linked it to Richard's household retinue

ACTUAL SIZE: 29MM



# BOAR BADGE OF BOSWORTH

This tiny badge was found near the spot where the last Plantagenet fought his last stand against the encroaching army of the Tudors

**O**n 22 August 1485, the course of English history was changed when Richard III, the last Plantagenet king of England, was killed fighting at the Battle of Bosworth in Leicestershire.

The victor, Henry Tudor, claimed the throne as Henry VII, and Richard's body was uncereemoniously buried in Greyfriars Friary, Leicester. When his skeleton was exhumed in 2012, it was noticed that he had died violently, with severe head wounds.

The rediscovery of Richard's body is one the most remarkable finds of recent times but the exact location the battlefield is

disputed. This was partially corrected in 2009 when a collection of archaeological finds were found in fields straddling Fen Lane, nearly two miles southwest of what had been traditionally regarded as the centre of the battle. The finds included coins, sword hilts, 28 lumps of roundshot and, remarkably, this small badge depicting a boar.

The white boar was the personal device of Richard III and badges were given to his supporters as a token of loyalty. This particular badge is made of silver gilt and they were exclusively made for the knights and nobles of his household retinue.

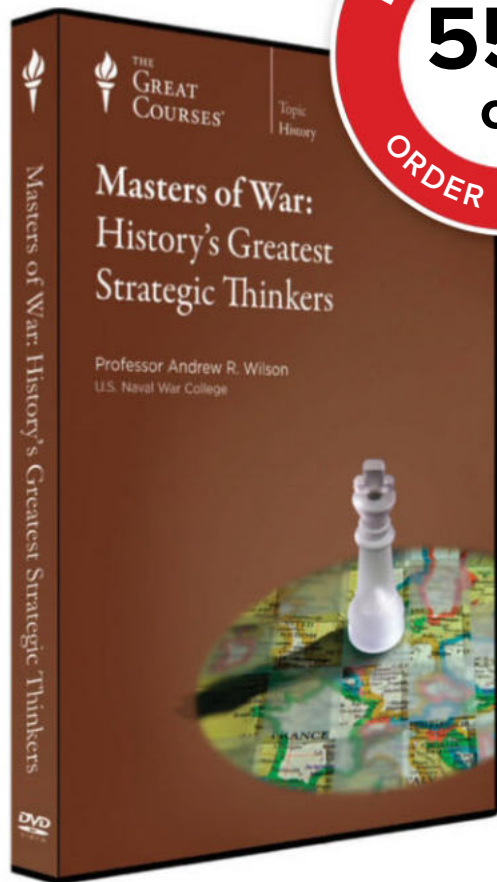
Measuring only 29 millimetres (1.14 inches), it was possibly lost by one of Richard's close supporters during the battle, possibly in hand-to-hand combat. The badge provided archaeologists with good evidence for the presence of the king's household close to the marshy area where Richard is supposed to have fallen, and pinned down a more conclusive site for the actual battlefield.

*Left: Despite being posthumously demonised by the Tudor dynasty and William Shakespeare, Richard III died bravely at Bosworth, "fighting manfully in the thickest press of his enemies"*



Image: Alamy





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